A **BRAND NEW** *FIGHTING FANTASY* MINI ADVENTURE!
DARE **YOU** VENTURE INTO THE SHRINE OF THE SALAMANDER?

ISSUE 2 | JANUARY 2010

Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

LESSONS LEARNED

MORE HEARTWARMING MORALS FROM THE GAMEBOOKS

NIGHT OF THE WRITER!

JONATHAN GREEN RECALLS PREVIOUS ADVENTURES AND TALKS OF FUTURE ONES...

FRIENDLY FIRE?

TITAN ISN'T JUST A LAND RULED BY THE SWORD. THE GUN HAS A PLACE TOO...

letter from the editor

It's a great big welcome back for everyone to the pages of *Fighting Fantazine*!

From a quick perusal of other fandoms, it can be easily said that with this issue we've achieved better than over 90% of most fan magazines (regardless of hobby or interest subscribed to) which fold after only the first issue. So, congratulations to all involved in producing or supporting the first issue, and here's to many more issues in the future. And I'll take this moment to encourage those readers who have thought about contributing, but haven't yet, to get in touch to talk through possible submissions. We're also keen to hear from people about what they like, dislike and would like to see in future issues.

To that end, the next issue will be featuring a largeish survey that will canvas not only this fanzine and what readers want from it, but also the *Fighting Fantasy* experience as a whole. YOU the reader will have the opportunity to given your opinions on each of the books as well as the writers and artists and other related things. All of this comes with the potential for some prizes from Wizard Books to boot! More on what goodies can be won and the survey form itself next issue...

Meanwhile, joining this issue as contributors are Adrian Young and his "Chronicles of Heroes", detailing the exploits of *Fighting Fantasy* RPG adventuring; Ian Brocklehurst with our first piece of Titan-based fan fiction; and Simon Osborne with a look at the history of maps within the *Fighting Fantasy* series. On top of all that we have the fantastic art of Natalie Roberts gracing our cover, illustrating a scene from Andrew Wright's *Shrine of the Salamander* mini adventure (some of Andrew's other efforts can be played in the micro adventures presented in Wizard Books monthly newsletter) with the superb interior art by Brett Schofield.

These newcomers join our contributors from the first issue and help swell the page count to a mammoth 92 pages this time! Our 'old hands' bring us more of the same goodies featured in the previous issue: we've a 200 reference mini adventure using the *Sorcery!* spell system, the second half of the illuminating interview with writer Jonathan Green, an exploration of guns and gunpowder in the context of Titan and more denizens of the Pit. On top of that we have more morals to be drawn from the gamebooks, Jamie Fry and Dan Satherley return with their columns on collecting and playing the gamebooks respectively, and a round up of the latest gamebook news from *Fighting Fantasy* and the wider community.

Once again I've probably delayed you enough, so go read and enjoy!

Alex

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Games.groups.yahoo.com/group/titan_rebuilding/
and the wikia *Titannica* found here:
Fightingfantasy.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page

CONTRIBUTIONS
Contributions to the fanzine in the form of letters, articles, reviews, fanfiction, artwork, comics et cetera are welcomed and readily invited. These can be sent to the editor via e-mail as long as it is a standard format like JPEG and the scan is of high quality (1200 dpi preferred).

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
April 2nd 2010

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Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

ISSUE 2 | JANUARY 2010

FEATURES

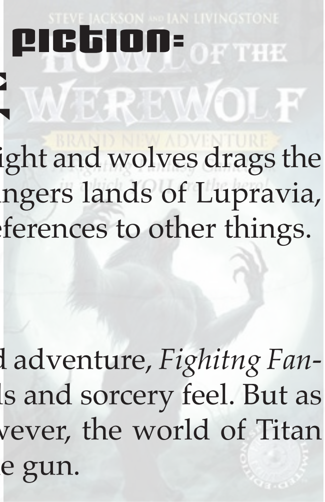
06 interview:
IT ISN'T EASY BEING GREEN

Jonathan Green talks to *Fighting Fantazine* about his Puffin gamebooks and writing in general in the second part of his interview.

16 mini adventure:
SHRINE OF THE SALAMANDER

by **Andrew Wright**
Illustrated by **Brett Schofield**

Hideous Horntoads from the Croaking Caves have stolen the sacred idol of Verlang! YOU are a forge-priest from the Copperstone Mines. Armed with just your war hammer and a head full of spells, can YOU enter the Croaking Caves and retrieve the idol from the Shrine of the Salamander?



58 the fact of fiction:
HOWL OF THE WEREWOLF

Jonathan Green's tale of moonlight and wolves drags the player through not only the dangers lands of Lupravia, but also through a myriad of references to other things.

82 bang!

Apart from the odd space-based adventure, *Fighitng Fantasy* tends to have a very swords and sorcery feel. But as **Warren McGuire** explains however, the world of Titan isn't entirely out from under the gun.

OTHERS

70 MAPS IN FOCUS
73 *OUT OF THE FRYING PAN...*
86 EVERYTHING I REALLY NEED TO KNOW I LEARNT FROM READING *FIGHTING FANTASY* GAMEBOOKS PART 2

REGULARS

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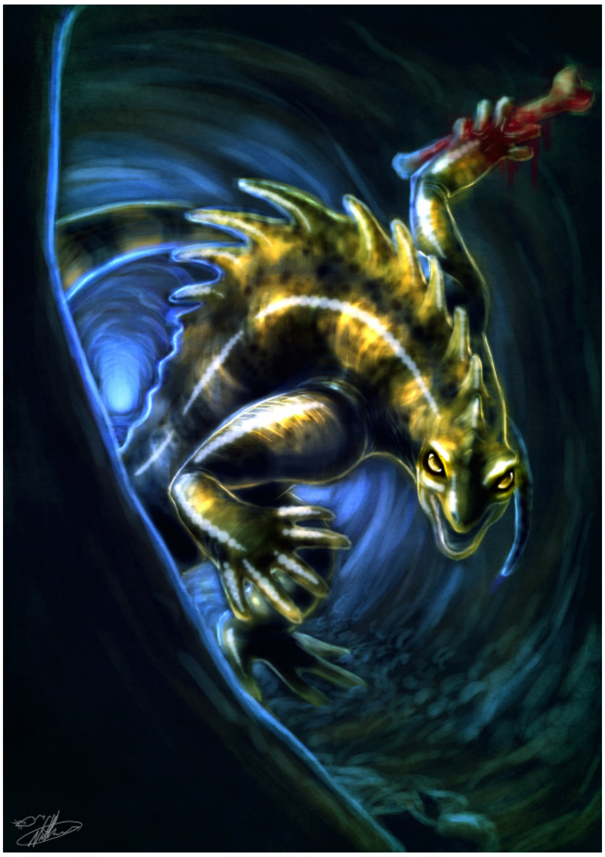
Turn to paragraph **1**.



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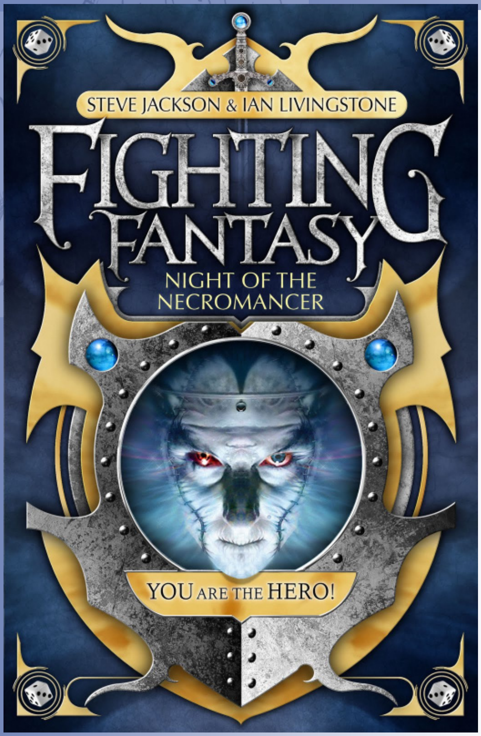
With thanks to: Jonathan Green, Leo Hartas, Martin McKenna, Nick Sidwell at Icon Books, and the rest of the team at *Titan Rebuilding* for their support.

Where possible, permission from the artists has been sought for the reproduction of *Fighting Fantasy* art. If you have any queries about this, please contact the Editor. "With a sinister smirk, the horrible creature reveals its two dreadful curved incisors."

OMENS & AUGURIES

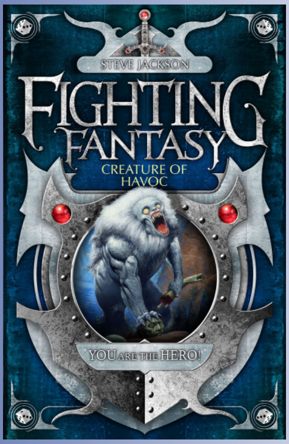


THE NECROMANCER ARRIVES TONIGHT...

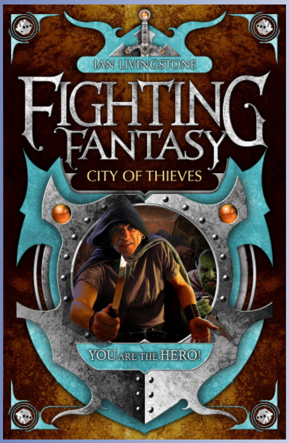
On the *Fighting Fantasy* front, we have a brand-new gamebook scheduled for April: *Night of the Necromancer* by Jonathan Green (image to left is an early prerelease mock-up). According to Amazon.co.uk, the plot is as follows:

Death is not the end...You are a knightly warrior, returning to your ancestral castle having been away for a number of years fighting a crusade against the forces of darkness in the Mauristatian principality of Bathoria. You are just within sight of home when you are struck down by a band of murderers. Driven by the need to know why you have been killed, and on whose orders, you rise again as a ghost. This is where your adventure begins, as you set out to solve the mystery of your own murder.

Jongreenunnaturalhistory.blogspot.com has more details. The author has confirmed that the book is set to be released in April.

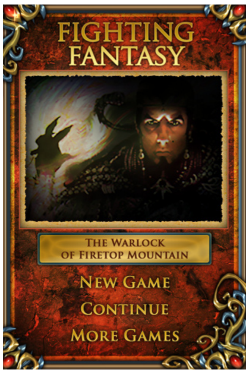


2010 will also see several more *Fighting Fantasy* books being reprinted as part of Wizard Books' ongoing "Series 2". *City of Thieves*, *Creature of Havoc* (both February), *Bloodbones* (April), *House of Hell* and *Eye of the Dragon* (both June) are scheduled to be released during the year. Each of the books will retail for 5.99 GBP.



...and He Isn't Alone

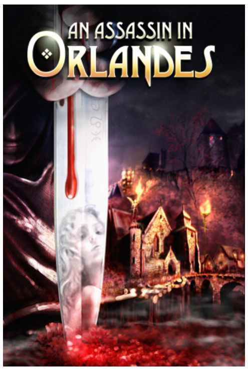
We are seeing the *Fighting Fantasy* series become more accessible to newer generations thanks to several electronic releases. Aspyr has released a version of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* for the Nintendo DS console, and Big Blue Bubble has done the same for the iPhone and iPod Touch. The latter can be downloaded from the iTunes store for 2.99 USD. Not a bad deal. URL is Itunes.apple.com/ca/app/fighting-fantasy-the-warlock-firetop/.

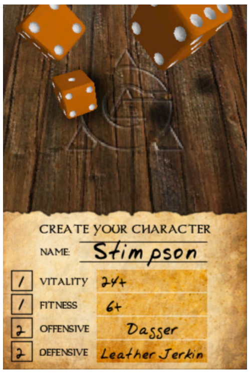


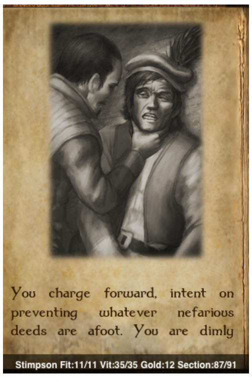
Big Blue Bubble has also announced a version of *Deathtrap Dungeon* to follow this year. There are also plans to bring other titles to the platform, including *The Citadel of Chaos*, *Creature of Havoc* and *City of Thieves*.

If You Can't Get Enough of Your iPhone...

An Australian company has announced the release of two original fantasy gamebooks for the iPhone/iPod Touch: *An Assassin in Orlandes* by S.P. Osborne and illustrated by Pirkka Harvala (due late January) and *The Siege of the Necromancer* by Neil Rennison and illustrated by Dan Maxwell (due early February). These new books will feature a full rules system. Visit Tinmangames.com.au/ for previews. We wish them the best of luck. (Three screenshots are shown to the right for the first of these games *An Assassin in Orlandes*.)




CREATE YOUR CHARACTER
NAME: Stimpson
1 VITALITY 24+
1 FITNESS 6+
2 OFFENSIVE Dagger
2 DEFENSIVE Leather Jerkin

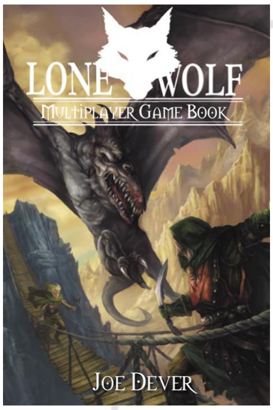

You charge forward, intent on preventing whatever nefarious deeds are afoot. You are dimly

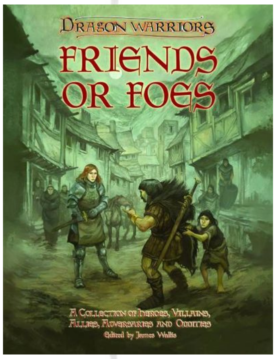
Stimpson Fit:11/11 Vit:35/35 Gold:12 Section:87/91

The Wolf and the Dragon

After being delayed, the Collector's Edition of the thirteenth *Lone Wolf* gamebook, *The Plague Lords of Ruel*, has been released by Mongoose. Priced at 11.00 GBP, this book continues the adventures of the last Kai Lord.

March 2010 will also see the release of an all new roleplaying game based on the *Lone Wolf* mythos. *The Lone Wolf Multiplayer Game Book* will allow you to adventure


LONE WOLF
MULTIPLAYER GAME BOOK
JOE DEVER


DRAGON WARRIORS
FRIENDS OR FOES
A Collection of Heroes, Villains, Allies, Adversaries and Oddities
Edited by James Wallis

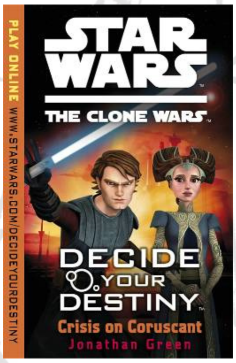
in Magnamund with a group of friends. The book introduces the core rules (which are the same used in the gamebooks, thus making this an ideal game for beginners), a Kai Lord character class and three introductory scenarios. It will be available from Mongoose's website at 10.00 GBP.

Mongoose has also been busy with releases for the new edition of the *Dragon Warriors* RPG. This time they have brought us *Friends or Foes*, a book of 36 richly-detailed characters designed to be introduced into a DW campaign. The 64-page book is available now at 10.00 GBP. Visit www.mongoosepublishing.com to buy.

Crisis? What Crisis?

Not content with having written the last two new *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks, Jonathan Green will also greet the new year with a new *Star Wars: The Clone Wars – Decide your Destiny* gamebook. *Crisis on Coruscant* is set to be released January 28, with a recommended retail price of 5.99 GBP. From Jon Green's webstore:

The Galactic Senate is under attack! As Padawan to Jedi Master Shaak Ti, your mission is to rescue Chancellor Palpatine, then find out who is responsible for the plot. Your adventure will take you from the depths of the underlevels on Coruscant, to the Great Mesra Plateau and Jabba the Hutt's Palace on Tatooine. Will you prove yourself worthy of your Jedi training or turn to the dark side when the going gets tough?


PLAY ONLINE WWW.STARWARS.COM/DECIDEYOURDESTINY
STAR WARS
THE CLONE WARS
DECIDE YOUR DESTINY
Crisis on Coruscant
Jonathan Green

According to the author, the book will feature exclusive online content. It will be released alongside another gamebook titled *Dooku's Secret Army*, both of them courtesy of Sunbird.

Exterminate!

After a two-year hiatus, the *Doctor Who – Decide your Destiny* series seems to be sparking back into life with two new titles slated for April: *The Coldest War* by Colin Brake and *Claws of the Macra* by Trevor Baxendale. Brought to you by BBC's Children Books, both are expected to retail for 5.99 GBP.

...or Be a Millionaire

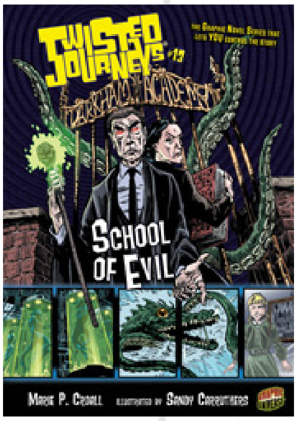
Heather McElhatton, author of the gamebook for adults *Pretty Little Mistakes*, will be authoring a new interactive novel. Due for release in May, *Million Little Mistakes* will put you in the shoes of a lottery winner who has won 22 million. In this book:

you get to live your fantasy life. That's assuming your fantasy would actually make you happy. Take the money and spend it, donate it, burn it up, lose it or have it pried out of your hands by well-meaning loved ones.

Published by HarperCollins, the book will retail for 14.99 USD.

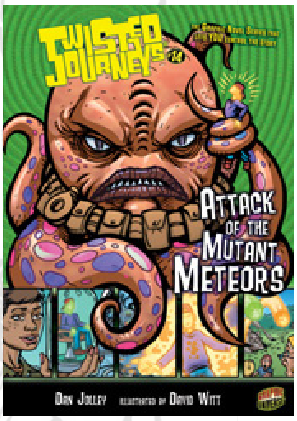
If Being a Millionaire is Not Enough...

Perhaps the most intriguing gamebook news of the year is the appearance of two books based on the *Prince of Persia* videogame franchise. *The Guardian's Path* and *To Right a Wrong* will tie in with Disney's upcoming film *Prince of Persia: the Sands of Time*. Sadly, the authors and publishers chose to go down the pick-a-path route with these, instead of spicing things up with a rules system. The books might still be worth a look, though. They are scheduled for April at 4.99 USD each. At about the same time, Disney will also be releasing two pick-a-path books based on their Aaron Stone TV show.


TWISTED JOURNEYS #13
SCHOOL OF EVIL
MARIE P. CROALL
SANDY CARRUTHERS

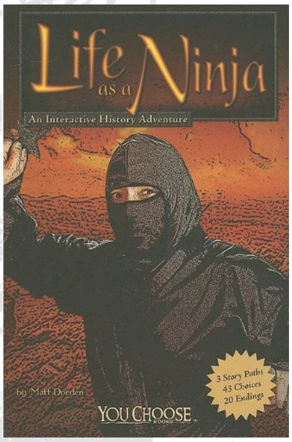
Two New Twists in Your Journey

2010 will see two new *Twisted Journeys* titles released: *School of Evil* and *Attack of the Mutant Meteors*. So far this series seems to have done a good job at combining text and comic book panels to provide a visually attractive gamebook experience. Visit Lernerbooks.com to see previews of both books. Recommended retail price is 7.95 USD.


TWISTED JOURNEYS #14
ATTACK OF THE MUTANT METEORS
DAN JOLLEY
DAVID WITT

Not Learning Enough History?

The You *Choose: Interactive History Adventures* series also has several releases scheduled for this year. *Life as a Ninja* and *Life as a Knight* will allow you to play the part of these warriors from ages past. On the other hand, *Ancient Greece* and *Ancient Rome* will allow you to explore these classic historical eras. Suggested price for each is 6.95 USD. Expect them in May. **FF**


Life as a Ninja
An Interactive History Adventure
by Matt Doeden
YOU CHOOSE
3 Story Paths 43 Choices 20 Endings

IT ISN'T EASY BEING GREEN

FIGHTING FANTAZINE CONTINUES A CHAT WITH AUTHOR **JONATHAN GREEN**

Continuing from the previous issue, the interview with author Jonathan Green looks back to where it all began, with those first three Puffin Books adventures, as well as forwards to more recent developments.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS, *FIGHTING FANTASY* GAMEBOOKS AND WRITING

What is your background?

I had a conventional, unremarkable childhood. I was an only child so I spent a lot of time having to occupy myself, hence my interest in solo adventure gamebooks was almost inevitable.

At which point did you realized that you wanted to make your living from writing?

After my first commission, *Spellbreaker*, back in 1992. However, it took a little longer to make the dream a reality.

Had writing been a big thing throughout childhood and school?

I have always wanted to write for as long as I can remember. My mum tells me that as a child I was always making little books. I can remember stapling bits of paper together at the age of six, and filling school exercise books with stories about a character called Big Eye by seven.

What things from those formative years do you think still influence your writing today?

I've always enjoyed fantasy, and later science fiction. I remember my mum bought me a book about monsters when I was a child, so I guess it was her fault! My gran once asked me when I was going to 'grow out of monsters'. Well I'm 38 now, and with *Stormslayer* out this past September, it doesn't look like it's going to be any time soon.

How much of a *Fighting Fantasy* fan were you in your youth and was this a shared interest?

I was a huge fan, and collected the first eleven books religiously. However, there was always the expectation from my family that *Fighting Fantasy* was a craze I would grow out of. From there on my purchases dropped off and, although I bought *Out of the Pit* and *Titan*, as well as *Advanced Fighting Fantasy*, I only bought one issue of *Warlock* as a child. I've acquired more since. But I never lost my passion for the games system and the fantasy setting of those early books.

Did you feel *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* was a step in the right direction or a failure to understand the lure of solo gamebooks that for many would not translate into a need to play *Dungeons & Dragons*-style role-playing?

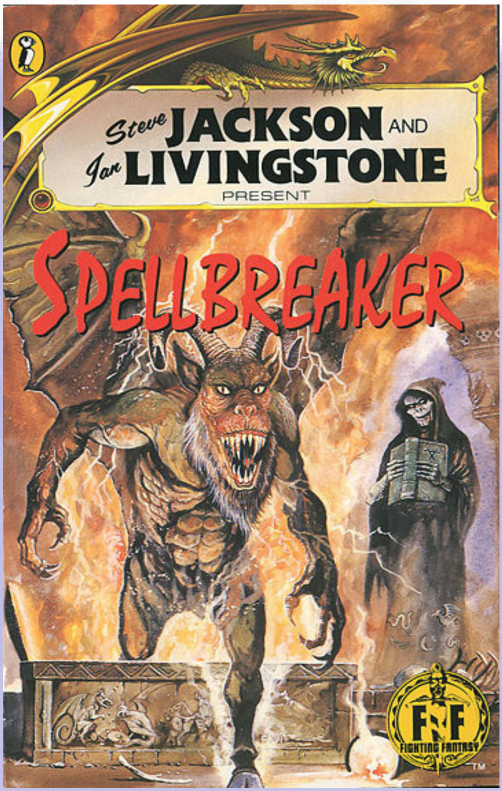
I loved the *Advanced Fighting Fantasy* stuff and have referenced it in various gamebooks. There had already been Steve Jackson's *Fighting Fantasy – The Introductory Role-Playing Game* and *The Riddling Reaver* anyway. I think one of the strengths of *Fighting Fantasy* is that it is flexible enough to be moulded to suit various formats.

Which book do you think sums up *Fighting Fantasy* the best?

Deathtrap Dungeon.

Is there a 'golden period' in the Puffin range where they were churning out classic title after classic title?

For me it would have to be those that appear from about #38 to #48. Not all of them were classics by any means, but in there you've got *Vault of the Vampire* and all of Stephen Hand's contributions to the series – *Dead of Night*, *Legend of*



STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
SPELLBREAKER
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION

Photo © Jonathan Green, 2009. Used with permission. Visit jongreenunnaturalhistory.blogspot.com

the Shadow Warriors and *Moonrunner*. And, funnily enough, all of those books were illustrated by Martin McKenna. My favourite *Fighting Fantasy* writer and favourite *Fighting Fantasy* artist – what's not to like?

Which is your favourite gamebook from the Puffin run?
Dead of Night.

Are you of the opinion that the books got harder as the range progressed?
Yes. I think people (including myself) forgot that the books were originally aimed at children. However *Fighting Fantasy* has parallels with anthology comic *2000AD*, in that the Puffin gamebooks began to grow up with their audience. A number of those children who had loved *Fighting Fantasy* when it first came out, still wanted to read *Fighting Fantasy* as adults and wanted to be challenged and excited by the books as much as they had been when they were younger.

Stormslayer
FIGHTING FANTASY

How have you handled the demands of being a teacher with deadlines for books?
I gave up the teaching! It's as simple as that. I used to forgo sleep and time with my family, busting a gut to meet one deadline after another and something had to give. Now I still bust a gut to meet deadlines and forgo sleep, but at least I get to spend more quality time with my nearest and dearest.

Have you had colleagues or students that have read your books, but not realized that you were the author in question?
I don't think so – I've never been very good at keeping my writing a secret from my students.

What hobbies do you have outside of writing and *Fighting Fantasy*?
I play a bit of Xbox from time to time, I enjoy going to the cinema, I like to visit castles and the like, and go for walks in the wilds. But most of all, I enjoy spending time with my two young children.

What is/are your writing schedule/habits like?
Even though I now write full-time (outside of childcare duties, of course), I still follow the same pattern I did when it was only a paying hobby. In other words, I write when I can. I get about six hours in the middle of the day, when my children are at school, and then I write in the evenings and at weekends when I can.

I almost always work with music playing in the background but I prefer to work to something without lyrics. Film soundtracks are best, as they can help create a particular mood I may be trying to convey in my writing. If I'm working on an action scene, I'll listen to a big blockbuster soundtrack. If I'm working on a more reflective passage, I'll put on something appropriately chilled out.

Do you have a system which you use to randomly assign paragraph numbers?
I have a piece of paper with 1 to 400 printed on it and I cross the numbers off randomly as I assign them; simple as that. However, before I get to that point I have to assign numbers to clue paragraphs and ones with illustrations which have to be spaced evenly throughout the book. There was a bit more of a pattern to it with *Stormslayer*, which you will probably notice when you play it.

Do you feel that some of the books in the series might have benefitted from a less rigid adherence to the 400 paragraph limit?
I don't know if that was really the problem. There were a few which didn't conform anyway.

How hard did you find the 400 paragraph limitation?
Not a problem. I always planned with 400 in mind. Towards the end of writing a book I might have to do a bit of tweaking to keep to that limit but I didn't overwrite until it came to *Werewolf*. I think that was a case of over indulging myself, at having the opportunity to write a brand new gamebook for the first time in over ten years.

Were there things in *Spellbreaker*, *Knights of Doom* and *Curse of the Mummy* that you would like to have included or tried to include but didn't fly with the editors?
Not a lot, no. One scene, involving a body on an autopsy table, I've managed to recycle twice (once in *Howl of the Werewolf* and once in my first novel – really a short story collection – *The Dead and the Damned*).

Is there a character from any of your books that you've sat back and looked at after finishing the story to find perhaps you've invested more of your own personality than you intended to?
I think it's more likely that I've imbued characters with the personality and attributes of the person I would like to be in moments of wish-fulfilment daydreaming, which you would never really want to be in real-life. It's like every young man can picture himself as a James Bond clone, but in reality you wouldn't really want to be a cold-hearted killer who is un-

able to conduct a simple interpersonal relationship and has nothing to live for beyond Queen and country. Would you?

Most of the books you have written have been a part of a defined series. Do you have any original stand alone books that you'd one day like to write?
The *Pax Britannia* books are my babies – admittedly they're the genetically-warped offspring of an aborted Doctor Frankenstein-style experiment, but they're my babies nonetheless.

I do have other ideas for books, but most of them are for ongoing series. That's the mercenary nature of trying to make a living as a writer. You want to keep yourself in gainful employment. If something works, you want to be able to repeat the process and do more of the same, and keep earning.

Do you read the sometimes brutal reviews of your books on Amazon?
Yes – although I then regret it. It can have an incredibly detrimental effect on one's self-esteem, but that's how I know I'm meant to be a writer. Despite all the criticism and character assassination (that accompanies some so-called reviews) I still come back to the writing, no matter how many times I'm knocked back, and that's a quality that every would-be author needs in bucket loads.

What do you think the role of the reviewer should be?
To strive for fairness and balance, giving enough insight into what a particular book is about and the themes it covers, to help the person reading the review make their own carefully considered decision as to whether they want to read it or not. To put it simply, a reviewer should review the book, and not use the review as an opportunity to write something that they think is cool or controversial just to get themselves noticed, as so many do. If you can master the skill of writing a balanced critique of a book, your qualities as a writer will shine through.

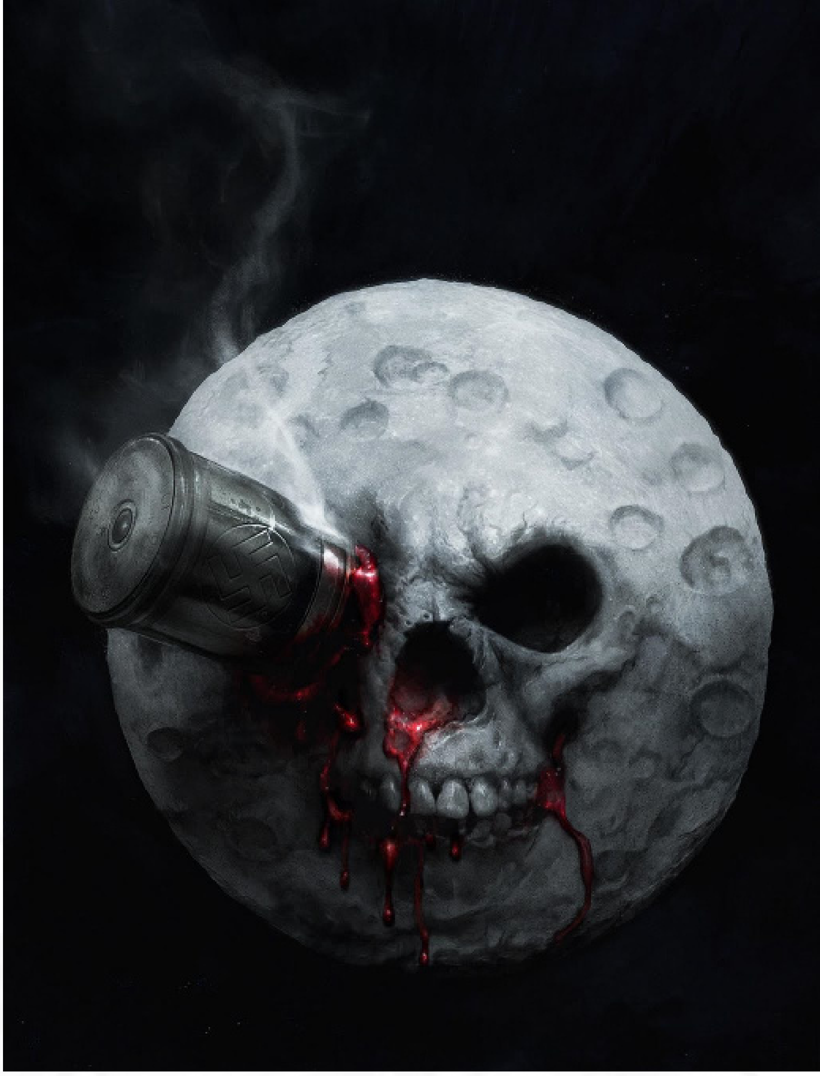
As the saying goes, "No one mourns a critic".

Favourite music/films/television/books and why?
My musical tastes would best be described as eclectic. I mainly work with Classical music on in the background or orchestral soundtracks from popular movies. Lately I've been listening to *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* and *Van Helsing* soundtracks a fair bit, as I've been battling my way through another *Pax Britannia* title, featuring vampires, werewolves and clockwork killers.

I like all sorts of movies, but I'm a sucker for the big summer blockbusters (which is probably reflected in the sorts of books I write), sci-fi and fantasy obviously, but on the telly I find that these days I'm mainly watching comedy, more and more factual programmes, and murder mystery thrillers along the lines of *Wire in the Blood* or *Rebus*.

It won't surprise you to learn that I read a lot of science fiction and fantasy books either. Anything by Terry Pratchett or Dan Abnett is a must. (Anyone who likes *Fighting Fantasy* or Pax Britannia should read Dan's latest novel, *Triumff: Her Majesty's Hero*, which is great fun.) I also read a fair bit of factual stuff for research purposes.

Basically I enjoy anything that takes me away from the world for a couple of hours in which dashing heroes get up to the sorts of things I might fantasise about doing but would never actually want to endure back in the real world!



Art by Mark Harrison © Rebellion, 2009. Used with permission.

Has family ever played a part in inspiring parts of your books?
Not really, but my son is at an age now where his own imagination is really starting to develop and he keeps making up monsters and names of places or characters that he generously tells me I can use in my books. I haven't yet, but who knows? Perhaps one day...

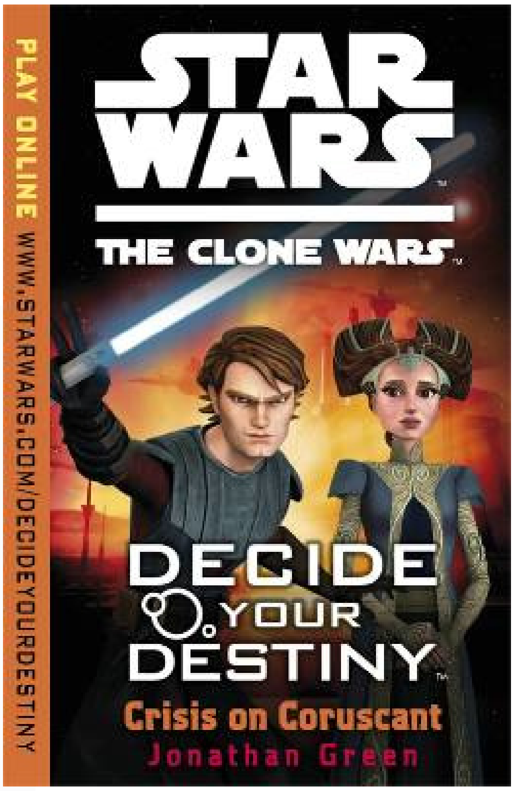
With *Blood Royal* out soon, when can the next Pax Britannia book be anticipated and what can tell of it?
It's called *Dark Side* and it's out this summer. This is the one that's going to take the dandy detective and Hero of the Empire Ulysses Quicksilver to the Moon – steampunk style! Just bear in mind that in space, no one can hear you hullabaloo.

Do you think *Pax Britannia* would be a good universe for a gamebook? If so, would you trust another writer with it?
Yes I do, and I have suggested it, but it's not something that particular publisher wants to pursue at the moment. As to whether I would trust it to another writer... I created the world and I don't want to do myself out of the work, to be honest.

CRISIS ON CORUSCANT

Another big franchise as a gamebook in the form of *Crisis on Coruscant*. Is there another range of gamebooks you would like to try your hand at or major franchise you feel could do with some gamebooks?

I would love to write a *Batman* adventure gamebook. The fact that Batman is as much a detective as a crusading dark knight, with a whole host of cool gadgets and gizmos at his disposal, would make for a great central character. And Gotham City, with all its myriad super-powered villains would make the perfect setting. However, this decision might have just a little to do with the fact that I've been playing far too much *Batman: Arkham Asylum* recently.



Failing that, I think *Spider-Man* could translate well as a gamebook as well, for similar reasons, and even the *Incredible Hulk*, with you playing as both Dr Banner and the Hulk. It would be great if you were required to go green and hulk out during the adventure, needing both Banner's brain and the Hulk's brawn to complete the adventure successfully.

How did this job come about?
They came to me, or rather my editor at Penguin who had commissioned my *Doctor Who* gamebook *The Horror of Howling Hill* did. She sent me an email asking if I knew anything about *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* and would I be interested in pitching for a *Clone Wars* gamebook, to which I replied 'Yes' and 'Yes'. I then went onto Amazon and purchased the relevant research materials. ;-)

How much freedom are you afforded in the *Star Wars* universe?
Well I was the one who came up with the plot, but I wasn't allowed to do anything drastic with the *Star Wars* universe – such as blow up Tatooine or kill off Anakin Skywalker. However, I was able to use existing characters in my adventure and make up new ones as appropriate. But I suppose there were more restrictions on this project than there were on any others to date.

Was this the first plot idea you pitched? If not, what ideas went down in flames?
I pitched five at the same time which were whittled down to two and from there it was *Crisis on Coruscant* that was chosen in the end. The other ideas were entitled *Flight of the Jedi*, *Shadow of the Sith*, *Last Clone Standing* and *Event Horizon*. I don't really want to reveal any more about these here, just in case one of them gets picked up at a later date.

What sort of difficulty level is the range pitched at?
Somewhere between the *Doctor Who Decide Your Destiny* books and *Fighting Fantasy* adventure gamebooks.

If given the chance to write more for this range, would you take it?
Oh yes. I had a lot of fun writing *Crisis on Coruscant*, and it's great to have added *Star Wars* to the list of childhood favourites that I have now contributed to.

Are you a fan of *Star Wars*? If so, any interesting memories/moments you'd like to share?
I am, although, like most thirty-somethings, I have fonder memories of the original trilogy than the recent prequels. I have vivid memories of the original *Star Wars*, which my Dad took me to see when I was six or seven. One of the scenes that really sticks in my mind from that first viewing is the alien chess game being played on board the Millennium Falcon.

GETTING PUBLISHED

Were there any other non-*Fighting Fantasy* book ideas you thought of submitting to publishers first, or was writing a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook you first 'goal' as a budding writer?
Before I even attempted writing for the *Fighting Fantasy* range back in 1990 I had already rather pompously written to Puffin Books about the potential for an alternative series of gamebooks. (Oh, the arrogance of youth!) That was what prompted consultant editor Marc Gascoigne to get in touch and say that I was welcome to pitch for a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, although he made it clear, right from the start, that the chances of being published were slim. As to what my original gamebook series was going to be like... twenty years on, I honestly can't remember. It then took two years, two entirely different ideas and several revisions before I got my first commission.

How did you go about the process of putting together your first submission?
I followed the writers' guidelines I had been sent – in terms of how to layout my proposal, how much to send, etc – but other than that, I made a lot of notes, drew a lot of maps and then eventually sat down and started writing – by hand.

How aware were you of the whole publishing system at the time you bunged *Outlaws of Kaan* into the post?
Do you know what? I don't know! The only guidance I had been given was how to submit a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook. As only Puffin published *Fighting Fantasy* there didn't seem any point trying to get myself an agent. And I still don't have one. As I've been published before, I've been fortunate enough to avoid the slush pile with anything else I've written since.

Given the general slowdown in the *Fighting Fantasy* range at the point you began submitting ideas, were you aware that you were essentially the only newcomer to the range at this point and that this might be something of a unique opportunity?
I didn't know that at the time. I was told that I got my break in part because another writer let them down, but I don't know who that was. Also, when I started writing *Spellbreaker* for real, I think *Return to Firetop Mountain* had just be published and of course the book before that had been *Siege of Sardath*, written by another newcomer at the time, Keith P. Philips.

How was the submission process to Puffin as an experience?
Very helpful and a bit of an eye-opener. It was the first time any 'professional' had critiqued my writing style. My Dad had always been very encouraging and English teachers had a different agenda to that of editors. Marc Gascoigne was very positive in his criticism and supportive in his comments.

Were there other submissions between *Outlaws of Kaan* and *Spellbreaker*?
No. I submitted two different versions of *Outlaws of Kaan* before laying it to rest and starting work on *Spellbreaker*.

Is there anything not known about *Outlaws of Kaan* that you'd like to share?
Elements of it were recycled in my other gamebooks. The outlaw band made it into *Spellbreaker*, the final scene was modified to become the end of *Knights of Doom* and a highwayman called Lord Lucre even turned up in *Howl of the Werewolf*.

How much interaction, if any, did you have with the writers of the other gamebooks in this Puffin period?
I shared a house with Marc Gascoigne for a while and I spoke to Paul Mason on the phone once, for about thirty seconds. Does that count?

FANDOM

How did you become involved in online *Fighting Fantasy* fandom such as *Titan Rebuilding*?
I just spend far too much time online. I suppose, bearing that in mind and my connection to the series, it was inevitable.

From various gaming/writing events where you've interacted with the public, how do you perceive the makeup of the readership of the *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks?
It's a pretty even split; 8-12 year old boys and 30-something guys who were 8-12 year old boys the first time around. But there have been a few ladies in there too, and they weren't there in the capacity of somebody's mum either – they were genuine *Fighting Fantasy* fans themselves.

From your experiences, how do you see Fighting Fantasy fandom and fans?
Most are very supportive, polite and complimentary, passionate about the *Fighting Fantasy* books and keen to see them do well and continue being published. As with any hobby, there is the vocal minority for whom nothing is ever going to be right until they're writing the series themselves and in control of the whole publishing process, including the commissioning of cover art.

You've mentioned elsewhere that fan feedback on your earlier books had an impact on the writing of *Howl of the Werewolf*. What sort of things did that feedback make you rethink or evaluate?
The gameplay mainly. As I explain later, a number of reviewers have been very direct in pointing out what was wrong with my earlier books. Sometimes, when you are so close to something that you've poured your heart and soul into, it is hard to see its faults so clearly. The chance to write a new *Fighting Fantasy* book was a chance to avoid repeating the mistakes in had made in the past.

Specifically, I have dramatically reduced the number of instant death paragraphs, I have reduced the number of specific items you need to get through to the end of the adventure successfully, and I have worked hard to eliminate the proliferation of overpowered enemies. When you do have to face off against a Big Bad, there is usually an alternative means of doing away with them, other than simply having to bash them about the head with a sword.

At the end of the day I kept in mind that people sit down to read/play a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook to relax and enjoy themselves for an hour or two, not to be annoyed or frustrated – not too much, anyway.

Jonathan and *Fighting Fantasy* co-creator Steve Jackson talking with fans at GamesFest 4 on October 24th, 2009

Photo © Jonathan Green, 2009. Used with permission.

From posts on your blog, you've been present at quite a few events recently to promote your books. Is this something you yourself have endeavoured to do, or the result of others tapping you on the shoulder and asking if you'd like to participate?
Half and half, I'd say. You have to self-promote as a self-employed freelance writer. I don't have an agent or a big publishing house behind me to do it for me, although the guys at Icon/Wizard have been good about arranging things and Abaddon Books have invited me along to a couple of things as well. If I see an opportunity to self-promote I'll either drop the relevant publisher a line and see if there's something we can sort out together, or I just get on the phone/email and arrange it myself.

Which do you prefer, the larger Games Day-style events or the smaller events such as the Ealing Library day?

I actually like both. I really enjoy Games Day and find it a great source of inspiration. It's good to catch up with the writers, editors and games developers I have got to know over the years through Games Workshop. It also gives me a general creative kick and the energy to go back to my lonely writer's garret and keep plugging away at this business that we call writing. But the smaller events are where I really get to talk about myself and what I love doing, in detail – and who doesn't like talking about themselves to a captive audience?

THE DEAL IS MADE – *SPELLBREAKER*

What was your initial reaction to learning you had been commissioned to write a book? Plus your reaction to it being a *Fighting Fantasy* book?
I was delighted to say the least. I can still remember the feeling – the thrill, the disbelief, the excitement. And a *Fighting Fantasy* book was always what I had dreamed of writing. I was over the moon.

A further photo from GamesFest 4 with, behind the table, Nick Sidwell of Icon Books, Jonathan Green and Steve Jackson

Photo © Jamie Fry, 2009. Used with permission. Visit fightingfantasycollector.co.uk

What was Marc Gascoigne like to deal with as an editor?
As I've said earlier, very supportive, helpful in his comments, encouraging even in his criticisms. He pointed out things that needed to be learnt by a young, naive, wannabe writer whilst never quashing my ardour for writing.

How much did *Spellbreaker* change from your original pitch?
Very little, as far as I remember. The background changed from you being a pilgrim and the monks asking you for help to you becoming the cause of the problem, to make the start more exciting. And that's something I've carried on into practically every other piece of fiction I've written since.

How were the duties of the two editors of the range split and how much control do you feel each had over what could and what could not be done in a gamebook?
Actually there were three editors involved in the process. Richard Scrivener was the commissioning editor, who Marc Gascoigne sent any promising manuscripts to having sorted the wheat from the chaff in his role as consultant editor, and once the manuscript was finished, Roger Wells then copy edited it. I spoke to him a few times on the phone and he was very pleasant and encouraging of a young writer as well.

In terms of control, I felt I had a lot. Richard in particular kept a rein on things getting too gruesome, keeping the youthful readership in mind, as well as avoiding – shall we say? – morally grey areas. I can remember two things being changed from this point of view. In the original version of *Bloodbones* there was a scene in which the devotees of Quezkari made you drink human blood. This was changed to the less specific, and possibly more innocuous, ichor of Quezkari. Also in one book – I think it must have been *Knights of Doom* – I had a scene in which a partially dissected corpse got up off the dissecting table and this was deemed too strong. However, as faithful followers of *Fighting Fantasy* will know, this scene made it into *Howl of the Werewolf*, accompanied by a full-page illustration of the autopsy subject! The times they are a-changing...

Did you have any contact with Jackson or Livingstone during your time writing for Puffin?
I was told that Ian had looked at my proposal for *Spellbreaker*, but that was it.

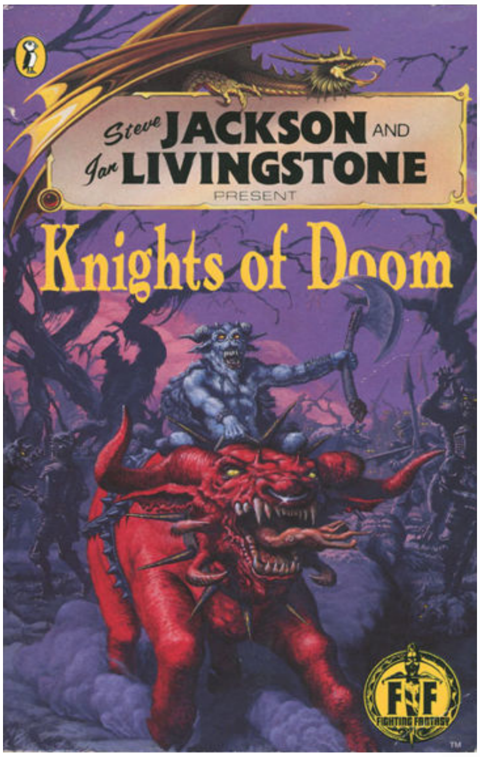
How much choice were given over cover and interior artists for your first book? What are your feelings about how they turned out?
I was always told I could request, or rather suggest, an artist but there would be no guarantee that I would get that particular artist. I requested Martin McKenna right from the start, but it wasn't until *Curse of the Mummy* that I actually got him. Now that I am in contact with Martin I know that we are inspired by similar things. I think every illustration brief I have ever written, I have always approached it as if it would be Martin working from it. In my mind's eye I imagine how he would realise the subject matter and I put in visual references that he can relate to. I was absolutely thrilled with the work he did on *Howl of the Werewolf*, and think – completely unbiasedly, of course – that those illustrations are some of his best.

When I discovered Alan Langford was illustrating *Spellbreaker* I was excited nonetheless. Part of the enjoyment of writing *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks is seeing the monsters you've created and the situations you've described brought to life by the artists. With every book I've written, some pictures have come out differently to how I imagined them, some are spot on, and some much better. If I'm honest, I thought that after his sterling work on such classics as *Island of the Lizard King* and *Battleblade Warrior* (no one draws Lizard Men quite like Alan) some of the illustrations for *Spellbreaker* were a little lacklustre, but I still have my favourites – the Devilworm, the Dancing Dead and the Mask (I wrote the book before the movie came out, by the way!).

However, I was distinctly disappointed with the map he drew which looked almost identical to the rough one I had sent in with the finished manuscript. In fact, I had to double check that it wasn't exactly the same map that I had drawn.

When you come up with an idea for a potential *Fighting Fantasy* adventure, what comes first?
It depends. With *Spellbreaker*, the first creative spark was actually provided by the cover of *Dungeoneer*, which was then filtered through an unhealthy obsession I had with Brother Cadfael mysteries at the time.

How did you find the process of writing your first book?
Goodness, it's a while ago now... I remember I really enjoyed writing it, spending days on end creating all these scenes and characters, as well as hints of a larger background. I wrote it all by hand too. I can't imagine doing that now! I think it was like any job – if it's worth doing, it's worth doing well – and that meant putting in the hours, some bits flowing well, battling over others.



I wrote the book in the order it's played, as much as possible. This meant writing parallel scenes at times, so, for example, when I'd finished Aryll I went back to write Driteham. It also meant that when I got to the end of the writing process, I was writing the final scenes of the adventure.

It was a slightly different process with *Stormslayer*, which you'll understand better when you see the book/play the adventure. I actually wrote the end just over halfway through the writing of the manuscript, but that meant I didn't run out of references for the grand finale and also meant I kept to the limit of 400 paragraphs this time (which might, or might not, please some people).

Did anything crop up in the writing of the book that hadn't been in any of your previous plans?
I can't actually remember now. I had planned it in detail – much more detail than my proposal for *Outlaws of Kaan*. So I don't think so.

How do you think your first effort stands up today?
It's not bad. There's a lot wrong with it in terms of gameplay, which has been well-documented elsewhere, but I was young and naive. That's my excuse anyway. I have to confess that I was one of those people who cheated at gamebooks as I got older – keeping several fingers between pages, always claiming that I was Lucky – and I think I was trying to write something that would challenge, or in fact completely confound, cheaters like me. In the process I kind of forgot the idea of a gamebook was for the reader to have a bit of fun.

In terms of the actual writing, I'm still quite pleased with some passages and some of the encounters I think were fun. I liked the whole hunt for Mistress Crowfoot, the bit with the Wodewitch and the Lurcher.

THE DIFFICULT SECOND ALBUM – *KNIGHTS OF DOOM*

Okay, one book commissioned. Were you throwing ideas to Marc Gascoigne as soon as your first was commissioned or did you wait till *Spellbreaker* was published to submit more ideas?
I waited until I had *Spellbreaker* in my grubby little paws before I bombarded him with anything else. I wrote the final manuscript for *Spellbreaker* in the summer holidays after my second year at Uni. There wasn't a lot of time to be working on anything else during term time, other than my degree work, so *Fighting Fantasy* had to wait until the holidays.

Was *Knights of Doom* your first idea for a second gamebook?
I remember that what I actually started work on first was a direct sequel to *Spellbreaker*, with you setting out to destroy the Black Grimoire, with the book itself trying to thwart your attempts, and the adventure even saw you travelling into Ruddlestone's past in an attempt to get rid of the thing. I know I got as far as writing the background and planning various encounters. I honestly can't remember now how that morphed into *Knights of Doom* – whether it was Marc or myself who set me off on another track (probably Marc) – but I wrote the synopsis and first 100 paragraphs during the Easter holidays and by the summer I was commissioned again.

Did you want to concentrate on gamebooks or did this seem an easy way of gaining experience till you were commissioned for an original book?
For a while I was labouring under the delusion that I could write at least one *Fighting Fantasy* book a year indefinitely and making enough in royalties to make a living at doing just that, but then, back in the real world...

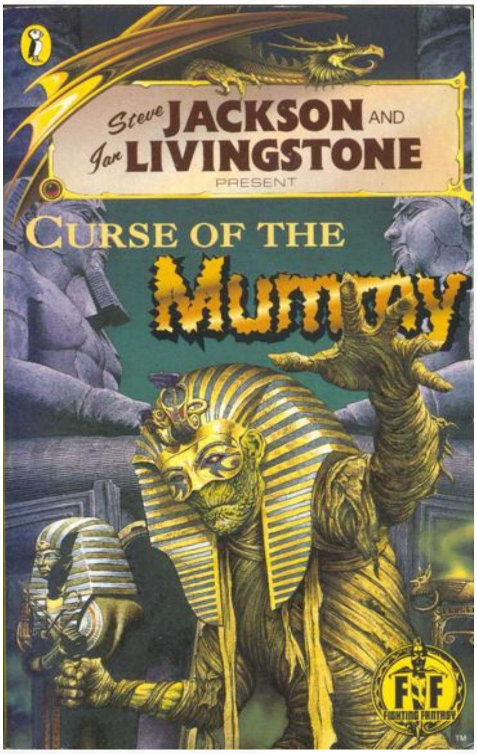
This and *Spellbreaker* are set around Ruddlestone. What made you choose this area of Titan to set your first books in?
It hadn't been used before. There were no clashes with anyone else's work and very little had been written about the kingdom. What had been written was quite vague as well and could be interpreted in various ways. I thought it could be my corner of Titan – like several of the other authors had carved out their own niches – where I could set all sorts of adventures.

Was writing a second gamebook harder than writing the first?
I remember getting the original pitch accepted was much easier, partly because I had a better idea of what the editors wanted and partly because they knew I could finish a book once I had been set to write one. That fact alone will get you a long way in publishing. In terms of writing the gamebook itself I think it was a little harder, only because I tried to cram so much in.

What led to you providing the map for the book?
Alan's effort – or lack of effort – on the *Spellbreaker* map was what inspired me to draw my own for *Knights of Doom*. And fortunately Richard Scrivener liked it enough that he used that one for the book. The most flattering moment was being asked to draw the map for a book that I hadn't written, *Revenge of the Vampire*. But I actually think my best one was for *Bloodbones*.

By this stage how aware were you that the range might be winding down?
I wasn't. I didn't know that *Return to Firetop Mountain* was supposed to have been the last one and I didn't have anyone else's royalty statements to compare sales across the series with what they had been like before.

This time around you had Tony Hough as cover and interior illustrator. Was that your choice? What are your impressions now of the artwork?



No, it wasn't my choice. Overall I thought his work was better than Alan Langford's had been on *Spellbreaker*. He made a real feature of breaking up the borders of the illos, inserting outlines of leaves and the like, which I think worked really well. The one thing about some of Tony's figures – which was true of his early *Fighting Fantasy* work but less so now – is that they have a tendency to end up a bit on the squat side. However, I loved his illos of the Mercenary Champion, the Hellhound, the Wodewose, the Chaos Warrior, the Knight's tomb, the Beastman Champion and Belgaroth.

Why do you think *Knights of Doom* hasn't yet been reprinted by Wizard?
It was due to be after *Curse of the Mummy* and I proposed a few corrections, but then the decision was made to bring out my first Ruddlestone book first. Fair enough really. And then the re-launch came along... If it was a case of either having *Knights of Doom* republished or writing a new book, although it's obviously more work, I think I'd rather write another brand new adventure.

THIRD TIMES A CHARM – *CURSE OF THE MUMMY*

A third new cover and interior illustrator. How happy were you that you got a different artist each time?
As I've already said, Martin McKenna was always my favourite and so I always wanted Martin to illustrate my books, but consistency never crossed my mind. Both Alan and Tony were established *Fighting Fantasy* artists and their work suited the books they worked on. However, I was delighted when I was told Martin would finally be illustrating one of my gamebooks, and providing his first cover for it too. But you know the saying, be careful what you wish for? Well, I think Martin's cover for *Curse of the Mummy* is fantastic and had a copy on my wall for some years. However, some of the internals were a bit rushed (something he admits himself) and weren't quite all I might have hoped for. But he made up for it with his work on *Werewolf*.

Did not knowing who the artist was or what their art was like make it easier or harder to picture what the finished book might look like?
Harder, as I couldn't play to their strengths or interact with them while they were creating the art to go with my words. It was completely different with *Stormslayer* and Stephen Player, however. Thanks to the wonders of email I saw every rough before he turned in the finished pictures and consulted with him directly on the look of the book.

How detailed and specific were you in your art briefs for the artist?
Very. I described the scene from the book, and then added more detail along with visual references from other sources (mainly other gamebooks and films).

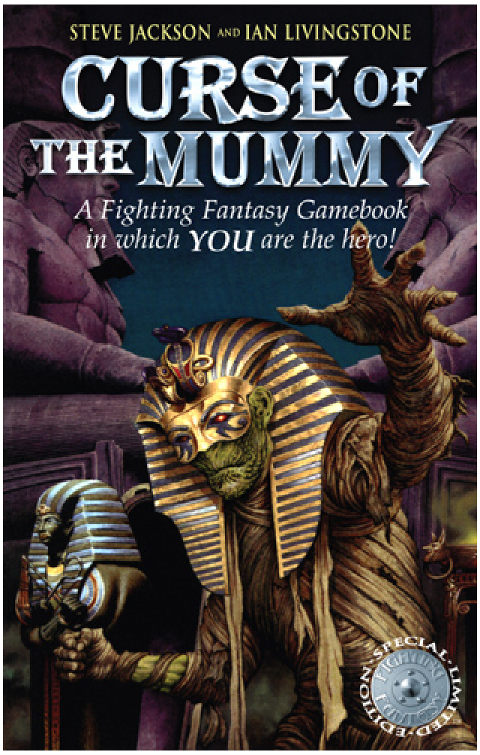
Can you give us one example of your art briefs to the artist where the art matched what you imagined, and one where it was some way out from what you had pictured?
A good example of an illustration brief that translated very well is this one (*Howl of the Werewolf* paragraph 190):

4) The Headless Highwayman
It is night again and we are travelling on a lonely road across desolate, windswept moorland. In the distance stands a coaching inn, a lone light flickering in one window. Materializing out of the darkness, in a haze of green-yellow luminescence twenty paces ahead is the figure of a phantom highwayman on horseback. It is as if the night itself is solidifying and taking on physical form. In life he was a flamboyant, over-the-top character and dressed accordingly. A black cape streams out behind the rider and he is wearing knee-length, black leather boots. He lashes the reins of his steed as it tears along the road towards us, foaming at the mouth, eyes burning with eerie witch-lights. As if that were not horrifying enough there is something horribly wrong with this apparition. The highwayman has no head. The spectre is aiming a flintlock pistol at us and has a basket-hilt sabre at its belt.

An example of one that didn't work so well was the Canker from *Spellbreaker* (paragraph 320). The Canker itself wasn't meant to look humanoid at all – it supposed to look more like a huge blob emerging from the sarcophagus, bristling with pseudopods and tentacles – and the illo that made it into the book was less humanoid that the first version the artist came up with.

What sort of time gap was there usually between you submitting the art brief and the delivery of the finished manuscript? Did things sometimes change in between that created errors?
I don't remember now and I think it varied depending on the artist and the book in question. There have been problems in the past. The one I remember most clearly was the picture Martin turned in for *Curse of the Mummy* of Sithera (paragraph

176). I had described a cultist and he had only drawn the statue that was only supposed to appear in the background. I had to change the text on the proof copy for that one, but I haven't had anything so dramatic happen since.


STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
CURSE OF THE MUMMY
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION

Book three and you shift to Allansia? What brought that about?
I had been to Egypt for a second time, I was inspired, I had always thought more could be made of Mummies in *Fighting Fantasy* and the Desert of Skulls seemed like the most obvious setting for such an adventure.

Why did the Wizard Edition of *Curse of the Mummy* see a removal of the dedication?
I didn't realise it had. Oops. But I'm not in touch with any of those people anymore, so it doesn't bother me, I'm afraid. They were important to me at the time, which is why the book was dedicated to them, but times change, people move on...

What prompted the decision to have a Mummy angle?
In general Mummies, like Vampires and Werewolves, have enough depth to them and mythology surrounding them to be the central villains of films, so I always thought, why not gamebooks? I just thought it would be interesting to cast one as the "Big Bad", rather than just have you stumble across another sarcophagus, carelessly left lying around in yet another dungeon.

Looking back now, if you could make one major change to the gamebook to fix or enhance something, what would that change be and why?
Oh, there would be plenty. Not so many super-powered baddies for a start, followed by not so much reliance on finding the right items and having so many of them. But when a book, or a short story, or whatever, is published you can always find things you'd like to change. A piece of creative work like that is never going to be perfect so you shouldn't get yourself tied up in 'what ifs' – that way madness lies. Just learn from the experience and move on to the next project, in the hope that you can make this one just a little better than the last.

***Curse of the Mummy* was the last Puffin book. Do you feel the range went out on a high?**
That's a hard question to answer. I'm either going to sound arrogant and boastful if I say 'Yes' or shoot myself in the foot if I say 'No'. Let's just say I felt it was better than some of the books, but it wasn't my best. But then I'm always inclined to feel that my latest book is the best, because I'm learning (and hopefully improving) all the time.

Did you fear that *Curse of the Mummy* might not see print given the length of time it took Puffin to finally publish it?
No. I was more concerned about the fate of *Bloodbones*.

Was the choice to make changes for the Wizard editions of *Spellbreaker* and *Curse of the Mummy* yours or Wizard Books?
I asked if it would be possible and they said that wouldn't be a problem. However, I was very limited in how much I could change. Any changes basically had to fit in the same space as the original text on the proof, so there wasn't the opportunity to dramatically re-structure parts of the book, no matter how much I might have liked to do so in some places.

BURIED - UNPUBLISHED *FIGHTING FANTASY* PROPOSALS DURING THE PUFFIN DAYS

What are your feelings on how the range simply ended?
I was very disappointed. I felt that Puffin didn't promote the books well at all. There was no big fanfare when a new book came out, it was simply added to the pile on the shelves and the identical green spines meant that new releases got lost amongst all the old ones. It would have been nice if there had even just been something like a poster of the front cover blown up to go in the shop window, but there was nothing like that.

What do you think were the reasons behind such an end?
Computer games were blamed, but I think the books were selling just as well as other children's titles, even up to the end, they just weren't selling as well as *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks had once. And in this age of Xbox, PS3 and Wii (all far superior to what was available in the mid Nineties) Wizard's re-launch has proved that there's still a market for *Fighting Fantasy* books out there.

While the range was with Puffin did you ever consider writing a *Fighting Fantasy* novel?
No. But there was talk of a collection of *Fighting Fantasy* short stories and I wrote one featuring Yaztromo for that. But as the book didn't happen in the end, I didn't actually get any feedback on the quality of my story for it either.

Did you think there was a market for *Fighting Fantasy* novels?
I don't know how well the *Fighting Fantasy* novels that were printed sold, but I'd like to think that there was.

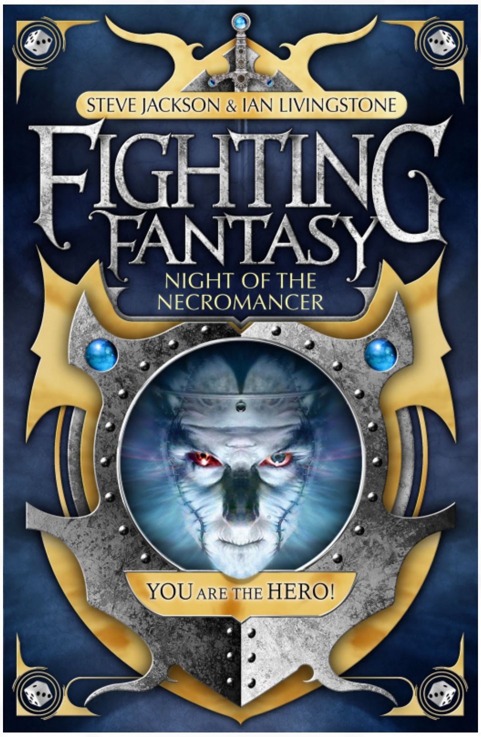
As far as is known, you had two ideas you were playing around with at the time the range ended that haven't seen print since then. These were *Saga of the Stormchaser* and a sequel to *Curse of the Mummy*. What can you tell us about both ideas that isn't already known?
To be honest, I don't want to say anymore at this stage. There isn't a lot more to reveal about the sequel to *Curse of the Mummy*. I think I wanted to call it *The Sands of Time*, or *Plagues of the Mummy*, or something like that, but I think it's unlikely I'll ever write that one. I believe I've got better ideas than that one knocking around inside my head now.

With regards to *Saga of the Stormchaser*, that's fully plotted and I even wrote a third of it back in the Nineties but Marc

Gascoigne passed on it, in favour of *Bloodbones* (then called *Pirates of the Black Skull*). When the chance arose to write another brand new gamebook after *Howl of the Werewolf*, I sent in full proposals for both *Stormslayer* (then called *Eye of the Storm*) and *Saga of the Stormchaser*. Wizard were happy with both and it was up to me which one I would rather write.

Even though *Saga* was partially written, I felt that I had learnt so much since originally plotting it I would actually want/need to give it a complete overhaul and start again from scratch. With that being the case it was just as easy to start something new, and *Stormslayer* excited me more.

With *Bloodbones*, *Howl of the Werewolf* and now *Stormslayer* now as gamebooks, do you find that once you've had an idea for a gamebook it doesn't let go till you've written it?
Something like that. Also all of those books were either written, or the original idea originated long ago. Since starting on *Stormslayer* I've had a couple of brand new ideas for gamebooks, but it's too early to say, at this stage, what might become of them. With that in mind, I'd better keep schtum.



Are there any other ideas from that period that haven't surfaced?
Plenty. I used to have a list of *Fighting Fantasy* adventure titles that I would like to develop. I've forgotten how many there were (and what they were) but there were between ten and twenty altogether, I think.

BACK FROM THE DEAD – *NIGHT OF THE NECROMANCER*

Have you had any feedback on how Wizard has viewed how the re-launch has gone?
As far as I'm aware, they're pleased with how it's going so far and certainly *Stormslayer* has been well-received pretty much across the board. They are now following up the re-launch and building on its success with five re-releases in the first half of 2010 along with the release of the brand new *Night of the Necromancer*, of course.

Are you involved in the penning of the pre-generated characters for the books?
I created the pre-generated characters for *Stormslayer* and will do the same for *Night of the Necromancer*, but I wasn't involved in updating the re-released older titles.

What was the germ of an idea that kick-started this book? A brush with death yourself?
No, nothing so dramatic. It just arose from my usual interest in taking an aspect of the *Fighting Fantasy* world that hasn't been developed in that way before or looking at things from an unusual perspective as I did with *Howl of the Werewolf*. I just wondered, what would happen if...

The Undead are an important aspect of the *Fighting Fantasy* books and have appeared in many adventures before, but the hero has never been one of them. It also opened up the possibility of using the well-documented powers of ghosts as a new set of mechanics.

Is it a brand new idea, or one of the many possibles you toyed with in the Puffin era?
It's actually a brand new idea, but then again, it's been thirteen years since the Puffin era ended and I think the germ of the idea might well have arisen in that time. So it's not that new either.

How soon after the go ahead for *Stormslayer* was the commission for this title?
This initial enquiry came in mid-June 2009, I then wrote the proposal and was given the go ahead pretty much straight away. This meant that I actually started writing *Night of the Necromancer* soon after the release of *Stormslayer* in the autumn.

Can you reveal who the cover and interior artists will be?
I'm very pleased to say that Martin McKenna is producing the cover as well as the internal illustrations, and I can't wait to see what he produces for this book.

You revealed on your blog that the adventure is to be 450 references in length. What can you tell us about why that happened?
Not much, as it happens. It all relates to a particular aspect of this book and to say anymore would spoil the surprise. Sorry.

What of the plot can you tell us?
Night of the Necromancer is unique among *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks in that it takes place when other adventures usually come to an end – after the hero has died. But to expand...

You are a knightly warrior, returning to your ancestral home in northern Ruddlestone having been away for a number of years fighting as part of a crusade against the forces of darkness in the Mauristatian principality of Bathoria. You are just coming within sight of the castle where you grew up when you are struck down by a band of murderers. Driven by the need to know why you have been killed, and on whose orders, you rise again as a ghost. This is where the adventure really begins, as you set out to solve the mystery of your own murder. All that follows occurs during the course of one night.

Fighting Fantazine *would again like to thank Jonathan Green for taking the time to answer the myriad questions put to him by the magazine. Meanwhile,* Crisis on Coruscant *will be available from January 28th,* Night of the Necromancer *from April 1st and* Dark Side *sometime around June/July. Readers can also keep up with Jonathan with his blogs:*
Jonathangreenauthor.blogspot.com/
and
Jongreenunnaturalhistory.blogspot.com/ **FF**

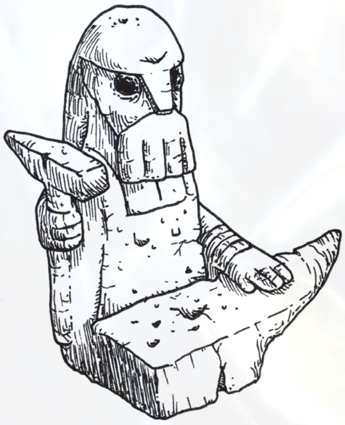
SHRINE OF THE SALAMANDER

by Andrew Wright[1]

Illustrated by Brett Schofield

INTRODUCTION

Before embarking on your adventure, you must first determine your own strengths and weaknesses. You use dice to determine your initial scores. On page 17 there is an *Adventure Sheet*, which you may use to record the details of your adventure. On it you will find boxes for recording the scores of your attributes. You are advised either to record your scores on the *Adventure Sheet* in pencil or to make photocopies of the sheet for use in future adventures.



Skill, Stamina and Luck

Roll one die. Add 4 to this number and enter this total in the SKILL box on the *Adventure Sheet*. You are a priest in this adventure, and not as skilled an adventurer as a normal warrior, hence the lower starting SKILL. However, you more than make up for this by being able to cast magic spells (more on those later).

Roll two dice. Add 12 to the number rolled and enter this total in the STAMINA box.

Roll one die. Add 6 to the number and enter this total in the LUCK box.

For reasons that will be explained below all your scores will change constantly during the adventure. You must keep an accurate record of these scores, and for this reason you are advised to write small in the boxes or to keep an eraser handy. But never rub out your *Initial* scores. Although you may be awarded additional SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK points, their totals may never exceed their *Initial* scores, except on those very rare occasions when the text specifically tells you so.

Your SKILL score reflects your weapon-mastery and general fighting expertise; the higher the better. Your STAMINA score reflects your general constitution, your will to survive, your determination and your overall fitness; the higher your STAMINA score, the longer you will be able to survive. Your LUCK score indicates how naturally lucky a person you are. Luck – and magic – are facts of life in the fantasy world you are about to explore.

Battles

During your adventure you will often encounter hostile creatures which will attack you, and you yourself may choose to draw your sword against an enemy you chance across. In some such situations you may be given special options allowing you to deal with the encounter in an unusual manner, but in most cases you will have to resolve battles as described below.

Enter your opponents SKILL and STAMINA scores on a spare sheet of paper. You should also make a note of any special abilities or instructions, which are unique to that particular opponent. Then follow this sequence:

1. Roll both dice for your opponent. Add its SKILL score to the total rolled, to find its Attack Strength.
2. Roll both dice for yourself, then add your current SKILL score to find your Attack Strength.
3. If your Attack Strength is higher than your opponent's, you have wounded it: proceed to step 4. If your opponent's Attack Strength is higher than yours, it has wounded you: proceed to step 5. If both Attack Strength totals are the same, you have avoided or parried each other's blows: start a new Attack Round from step 1 above.
4. You have wounded your opponent, so subtract 2 points from its STAMINA score. You may use LUCK here to do additional damage (see below).

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[1] This adventure is part pastiche, part tribute and part affectionate parody. There is plenty of deliberate plagiarism from both Steve Jackson (UK) and Steve Jackson (USA), and nods to Jonathan Green. All other plagiarism is subconscious and thus unintentional.

5. Your opponent has wounded you, so subtract 2 points from your STAMINA score. You may use LUCK to reduce the loss of STAMINA (see below).
6. Begin the next Attack Round, starting again at step 1. This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your opponent reaches zero, which means death. If your opponent dies, you are free to continue with your adventure. If you die, your adventure ends and you must start all over again by creating a new character.

Escaping

On some pages you may be given the option of running away from a battle should things be going badly for you. You may only *Escape* if that option is specifically given to you on the page. However, if you do run away, your opponent automatically gets in one wound on you (subtract 2 STAMINA points) as you flee. Such is the price of cowardice. Note that you may use LUCK on this wound in the normal way (see below).

Fighting More Than One Opponent

In some situations you may find yourself facing more than one person or creature in combat. Sometimes you will treat them as a single opponent; sometimes you will be able to fight each in turn; and at other times you will have to fight them all at the same time! If they are treated as a single opponent, the combat is resolved normally. When you are instructed to fight your opponents one at a time, the combat is again resolved normally – except that once you defeat an enemy, the next steps forward to fight you! When you find yourself under attack from more than one opponent at the same time, you will usually fight them in pairs. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you.

SHRINE OF THE SALAMANDER ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL = **INITIAL SKILL =**	**STAMINA =** **INITIAL STAMINA =**	**LUCK =** **INITIAL LUCK =**	**GOLD**	**PROVISIONS REMAINING**

EQUIPMENT AND ARTEFACTS	**NOTES**

Luck

At various times during your adventure, either in battles or when you come across other situations in which you could be either Lucky or Unlucky (details of these are given in the relevant paragraphs), you may use LUCK to make the outcome more favourable to you. But beware! Using LUCK is a risky business and, if you are Unlucky, the results could be disastrous.

The procedure for *Testing your Luck* works as follows: roll two dice. If the number rolled is equal to or less than your current LUCK score, you have been Lucky and the outcome will be in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current LUCK score, you have been Unlucky and will be penalized.

Each time you *Test your Luck*, you must subtract 1 point from your current LUCK score. Thus you will soon realize that, the more you rely on your LUCK, the more risky this procedure will become.

Using Luck in Battles

In certain paragraphs you will be told to *Test your Luck*, and you will then find out the consequences of being Lucky or Unlucky. However, in battles, you always have the option of using your LUCK, either to inflict more serious damage on an opponent you have just wounded, or to minimize the effects of a wound you have just received.

If you have just wounded an opponent, you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are Lucky you have inflicted a severe wound; deduct an extra 2 points from your opponent's STAMINA score. If you are Unlucky, however, your blow only scratches your opponent; and you deduct only 1 point from your opponent's STAMINA (i.e., instead of scoring the normal 2 points of damage, you now score only 1).

Whenever you yourself are wounded in combat, you may *Test your Luck* to try to minimize the wound. If you are Lucky, your opponent's blow only grazes you; deduct only 1 point from your STAMINA. If you are Unlucky, your wound is a serious one and you must deduct 1 extra STAMINA point (i.e., deduct a total of 3 points from your own STAMINA).

Remember: you must subtract 1 point from your LUCK score each time you *Test your Luck*.

More About Your Attributes

Skill

Your SKILL score will not change much during the course of your adventure. Occasionally, a paragraph may give instructions to increase or decrease your SKILL score, but it may not exceed its *Initial* value unless you are specifically instructed to the contrary.

At various times during your adventure, you will be told to *Test your Skill*. The procedure for this is exactly the same as that for *Testing your Luck*: roll two dice. If the number rolled is equal to or less than your current SKILL score, you have succeeded in your test and the result will go in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current SKILL score, you will have failed the test and will have to suffer the consequences. However, unlike *Testing your Luck*, do not subtract 1 point from your SKILL each time you *Test your Skill*.

Stamina

Your STAMINA score will change a lot during your adventure. It will drop as a result of wounds gained through combat, or by falling foul of traps and pitfalls, and it will also drop after you perform any particularly arduous task. If your STAMINA score ever falls to zero, you have been killed and should stop reading the adventure immediately. Brave adventurers who wish to pursue their quest must roll up a new character and start all over again.

You can restore lost STAMINA by eating meals or Provisions. You start the game with enough Provisions for 2 meals and during your adventure you will be able to obtain more. You must keep track of how many meals worth of Provisions you have left by filling in the details in the Provisions box of your *Adventure Sheet*: you may not carry more than 10 meals at any one time. Each time you eat a meal you may restore up to 4 points of STAMINA, but you must remember to deduct 1 meal from your Provisions box. You may stop and eat Provisions at any time except when you are engaged in a battle.

Luck

Additions to your LUCK score may be awarded in the adventure when you have been particularly lucky or created your own luck by some action. Details are given, where appropriate, in the paragraphs of the book. Remember that, as with SKILL and STAMINA, your LUCK score may never exceed its *Initial* value.

Equipment, Gold and Provisions

You start your adventure with the bare necessities of life. You have a war-hammer as your weapon, and a backpack to hold your equipment, treasures, artefacts, and provisions. You have a lantern to light your way in the darkness of the Croaking Caves. You also wear a battered suit of leather armour under your priestly robes. You cannot take your *Spellbook of Verlang* with you, as the priests of your order cannot risk its falling into the wrong hands in Daddu-Yadu – so you may not refer to this book at all once you have started your journey.

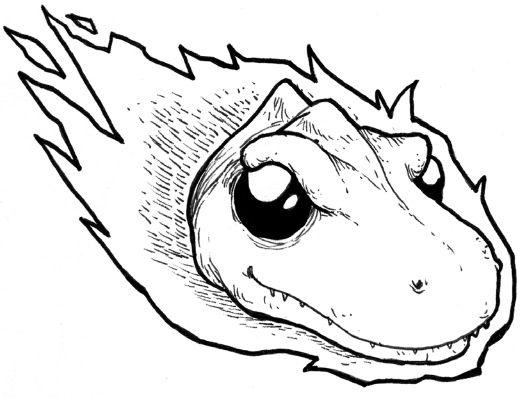
You have a pouch around your waste containing 5 Gold Pieces, the universal currency of all the known lands. You will need money to cover various expenses throughout your adventure, and 5 Gold Pieces will not go far. You will find it necessary to collect more Gold Pieces as you progress on your way.

You are also carrying Provisions (food and drink) sufficient for 2 meals only. As you will find, food is an important commodity and you will have to be careful how you use it. Make sure you do not waste food: you cannot afford to run out of Provisions.

Lastly, the priests of Verlang have given you one spell artefact to take with you on your travels. You may choose only one of the following artefacts and note it on your *Adventure Sheet*:

- a Giant Tooth
- a Cloth Skullcap
- a Potion of Fire Water
- a Galehorn

Other spell artefacts will have to be acquired during the course of your adventure.



How to Use Magic

In this adventure you play a priest of Verlang, god of smiths, and have the option throughout the adventure, of using magic spells. All the spells known to the priests of Verlang are listed in the *Spellbook of Verlang*, which follows on at the end of this section, and you will need to study this before you set off on your adventure.

All spells are coded with a three-letter code and you must learn and practice your spells until you are able to identify a reasonable number of them from their codes. Casting a spell drains your STAMINA and each has a cost, in STAMINA points, for its use.

Some spells require the use of an artefact. If you try and cast a spell without possessing the correct artefact, you will be wasting your STAMINA as the spell will not work.

DON'T FORGET! You may not refer to the *Spellbook of Verlang* once you have started your adventure.

THE *SPELLBOOK* OF VERLANG

HOT

The caster may direct this spell with his hands in any direction desired. As it is cast, a burning fireball shoots from the hands towards its target. It will be effective against any creature, whether magical or not, unless that creature cannot be harmed by fire. The fireball so created causes severe burns upon impact, but extinguishes soon after hitting its target.

Cost 4 STAMINA points

WOK

A coin of some sort is necessary for this spell. The caster places the coin on the wrist and casts the spell onto it. The coin becomes magically fixed on the wrist and acts as an invisible metal shield with an effective protection circle of just under three feet across. This will shield the user against all normal weapons. Afterwards, the coin is no longer usable as a coin.

Cost 1 STAMINA point

YOB

Casting this spell requires the tooth of a Giant. When this spell is cast upon the tooth correctly, a Giant, some twelve feet tall, will be created instantly. The caster has control over the Giant and may command him to fight an opponent, perform some feat of strength, etc. The Giant will disappear when his duty is done.

Cost 1 STAMINA point

POP

A potent little spell, but one which calls for great mental concentration, this spell must be cast on small pebbles. Once charged with magic, these pebbles can be thrown and will explode on impact. Apart from being dangerous to anything within shatter distance, the pebbles make a loud bang when they explode.

Cost 1 STAMINA point

MUD

As this spell is cast, the caster must sprinkle grains of sand on to the floor as desired (e.g. in front of a creature). The spell takes effect on the sand and the floor, creating a pool of quicksand. Any creature stepping on to this pool of quicksand will slowly be drowned in it.

Cost 1 STAMINA point

TEL

To activate this spell, the caster must wear a Cloth Skullcap. With the aid of this cap, the spell will allow the user to read the mind of any intelligent creature encountered, learning about its strengths, weaknesses, the contents of nearby rooms, etc.

Cost 1 STAMINA point

PEP

A Potion of Fire Water must be taken by the caster for this spell to be used. It will enhance the effects of the Fire Water to give the caster double or treble his or her own normal strength. Although the effects are temporary, they will normally be enough to aid in battle or to perform some feat of super-strength.

Cost 1 STAMINA point

ROK

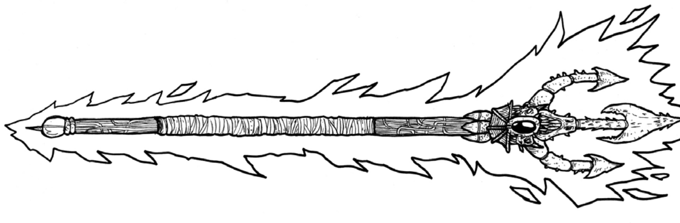
Special stone dust is required for this spell. The dust must be thrown at a creature as the spell is being cast. Within seconds, the victim will start to petrify. As its movements become slower and eventually cease, it will start to turn grey. Some moments after the spell is cast, it will have solidified into a grey stone statue.

Cost 1 STAMINA point

HUF

In order to use this spell, the caster must possess the Galehorn, a trumpet-like instrument which plays a discordant note. The spell is cast on to the horn and it is blown in a particular direction. As the spell takes effect, a tremendous wind rushes from the trumpet. This wind is capable of blowing over man-sized creatures, or it can be used to blow things off shelves, over ledges, etc.

Cost 1 STAMINA point



THE STORY SO FAR...

At the mouth of the immense Jabaji River, where it exits the Earth End Coastline and flows into the Kakhabad Sea, lie two strange subterranean communities. On the north bank, we find the perilous and paradoxical Daddu-Yadu – the Croaking Caves, of which more will be said later. On the south bank however, lies Daddu-Ley – the wealthy Copperstone Mines, controlled by priests of Verlang, patron deity of smelters and metal-workers.

Here, creatures of a dozen different races drawn from across the Verminpit labour in the labyrinthine tunnels, extracting copper ore from the very bones of the earth. In addition to their mineral wealth, the forge-priests of Verlang also possess two other valuable treasures. One is their Sacred Spring, whose blessed waters are bottled and traded across Kakhabad. The other is their Holy Idol of Verlang, reputed to have been made by the god himself, from the very same magical clay that Titan used to fashion the world, and fired in a basalt kiln on the Elemental Plane of Flame. Some say the powers of the Idol are the reason that the priests of Daddu-Ley have ruled over this corner of Kakhabad in comparative peace for many years past, and many years still to come.

Lortag the Elder, *Kakhabad: Its Lands and Peoples*, 284 AC, The Year of the Fox, Kharé: Axiome Press.

'Thieves! Thieves in the night!' So howled Gulanti, the old High Priest of Verlang, god of the forge. And it was true. The copper-walled cave-temple had been ransacked, the idol of Verlang taken from its rightful place on the rune-embossed bronze altar.

Evidence was everywhere. Numerous great, wet slimy footprints stained and criss-crossed the tiled floor of the inner sanctum. They erupted out of a gaping black hole in the wall, circled the chamber (and grabbed the Idol), and ventured straight back from whence they came.

A party of priests armed with hammers and flaming torches ventured into the hole, down a long, winding tunnel that had been carefully burrowed into the rock and braced with driftwood. It opened, via a secret entrance, onto the marshy banks of the mighty Jabaji River, and the priests looked out across a drifting expanse of dark water. There, on the far and distant shore, they spied fires gleaming in the caves that dotted the great cliffs of the Earth End Coastline.

'Daddu-Yadu,' breathed the High Priest in fear (for he had accompanied the search party). 'The Croaking Caves. Lair of the Horntoads...'

'I don't understand,' YOU say to High Priest Gulanti, patriarch of the Copperstone Mines. 'Why leave it so obvious? It's almost like somebody else wants us to think the Horntoads did it. It could be river pirates. Smugglers from Kharé. By Lorodil! Even the Shield Maidens of Lumlé could have done it! Why Horntoads?'

'My fellow priest, sometimes things are indeed exactly what they seem,' says Gulanti. 'There is no hidden message, no secret meaning. Our Idol has magical powers, and the Horntoads desire those powers for themselves. Hence they have stolen it from us. After all, have you not heard the rumours of the Salamander that has taken up residence among them, in the shrine of Furlakk the Frog God?'

You nod grimly. Only recently, a boat-captain complained to you that the Horntoad raids on river shipping had become more frequent since a Salamander had arrived at Daddu-Yadu and cloaked itself in the mantle of leadership. Salamander meaning of course the big flaming monsters from the Elemental Plane of Fire, not the small harmless amphibians of pond and lake. The important questions remained unanswered though. Why had a Salamander come to Daddu-Yadu? And how?

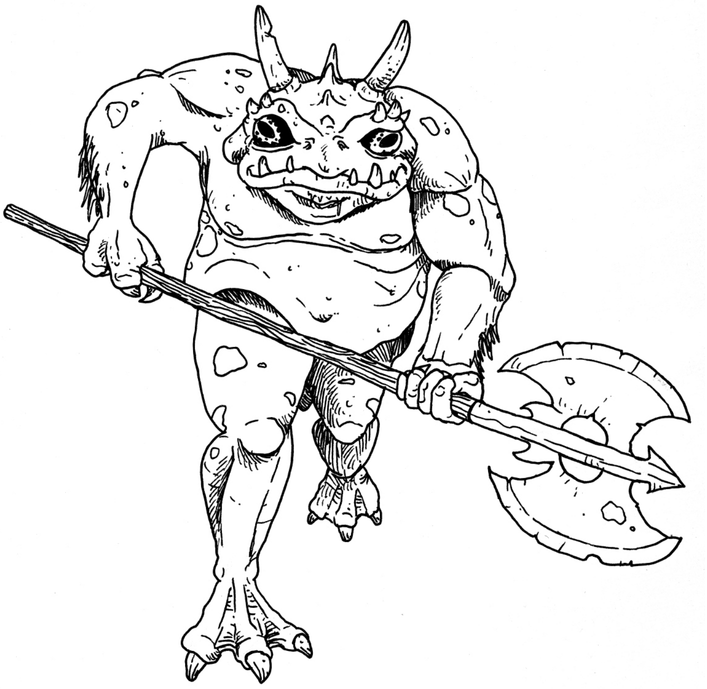
'And do you remember the story of the Idol itself?' says Gulanti, as if beginning a sermon. 'Verlang fired it in the molten furnaces of the City of Brass, with the help of a dozen enslaved Salamanders, the First-Spawn of their race. Perhaps one of them has merely returned to claim what it rightfully believes to be the property of its people.'

'But this is sacrilege!' you cry. 'The Idol of Verlang is for the priests of the forge-god alone to treasure! It is our most holy relic!'

'That is why you are here my friend,' says Gulanti, with a calm, firm voice. 'We need you to enter the Croaking Caves, slay the Salamander, and retrieve the Idol. We need you need to do it quickly too, before word leaks out that the Idol has been stolen, and the Copperstone Mines are aflame with open rebellion among the slaves and miners. You are the best at what you do. Go! And may Verlang guide both your hammer and your spells...'

It is true. YOU are an adventuring forge-priest of Verlang, and have undertaken many perilous quests across Kakhabad at the behest of your god. You have stared down the Apes of Mauristatia. You have braved the Beastmen of Tinpang Valley. You have even infiltrated the Necromancers' Guild of Throben. But how will you fare in this, your most dangerous adventure? Will you survive the Shrine of the Salamander?

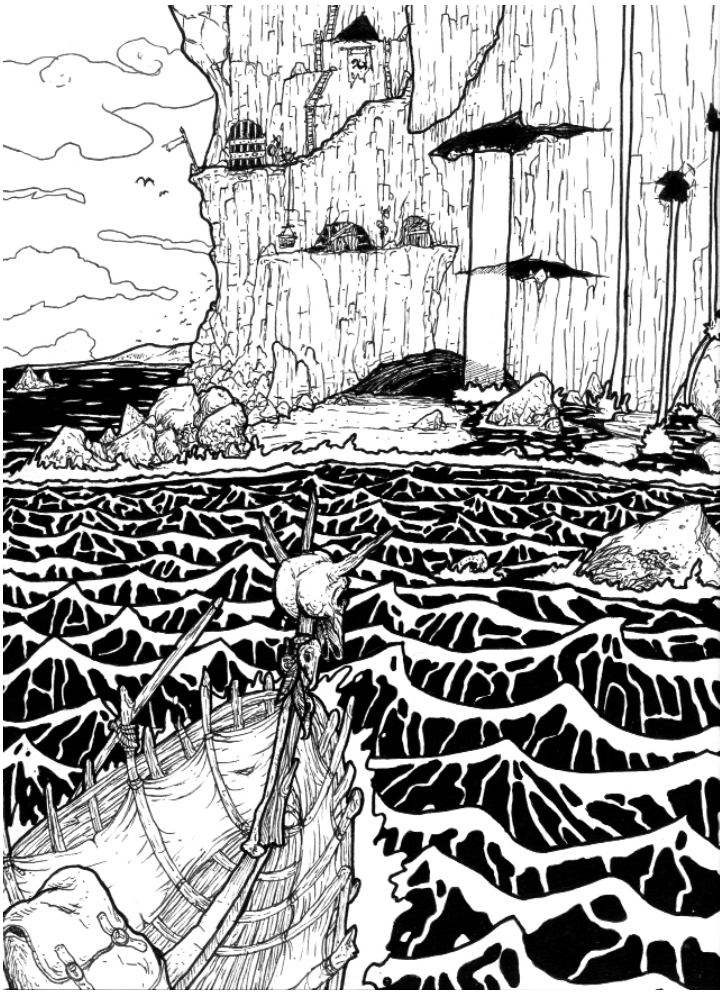
Turn to paragraph **1**.



1

At dawn you set out across the Jabaji River on the *Schoolfish*, a long but narrow coracle with a goat-skull figurehead. The boat's crew initially let it run with the current, before cutting back across the river's murky brown water with powerful strokes on the broad-bladed oars. The ferry captain Unzana – a short-haired woman from Dhumpus – is an experienced veteran of these parts and offers you much useful advice.

'The caverns of Daddu-Yadu are split into four areas,' she tells you. 'The Horntoads (she pauses to spit over the side of the boat) live in the main central caverns – the proper Croaking Caves. Off to the left, you've got the Under-Temple of Throff, the earth goddess. Her priests are sometimes friendly, sometimes grumpy. Up on the cliff top are the Crystal Mines. These are guarded by Dark Goblins who pay tribute to the Gaping-Maw Clan of Orcs from the town of Zuzbeck.'



'And the fourth?'

'The Tunnels of Ooze. Monsters and quicksand! Best avoided if at all possible!'

After a short while, as the sun slowly rises to shine weakly down on Kakhabad through thick grey clouds, the *Schoolfish* is brought ashore on the coarse orange sand that marks the Earth End Coastline. You leap off the prow of the boat and on to the beach. Before you lies a tall rocky cliff-face, riddled with caves and hollows. Somewhat to your surprise, Captain Unzana gives the order to relaunch and head back to Daddu-Ley.

'We can't remain here,' she shouts across the widening stretch of surf at you. 'It's too dangerous! If – no, sorry, – when you finish your mission, light a beacon at the top of the cliffs, and we'll come back and pick you up! One last thing – watch out for the grem...' But her words are lost on the wind.

You light your lantern and consider your options. You also notice plenty of material on the beach that is useful for casting spells. Add any of the following to your *Adventure Sheet* if you wish: three small pebbles, stone dust, and some sand. Then, choose – where will you go first?

The Under-Temple of Throff	Turn to **43**.
The Crystal Mines	Turn to **125**.
The Tunnels of Ooze	Turn to **149**.
The Croaking Caves	Turn to **87**.

2

Vittles are small balls of pastry with tough, chewy meat inside. They make ideal travelling provisions, and there are enough in the bag for 2 meals worth of Provisions. Add them to your *Adventure Sheet* if you take them. Return to **73** and make another choice.

3

You step out into the cavern and hold up your Jar of Bees. Instantly, all the Horntoads stop what they are doing, stare at you, and start drooling, excited by the frantic buzzing of the bees. You throw the jar in the air so that it traces a lazy arc up and then down into the centre of the pool. Immediately, the Horntoads erupt into a squabbling mass of amphibians, all attempting to reach the jar before their comrades. In the resultant chaos you edge carefully around the pool towards the northern passage. Cross the Jar of Bees off your *Adventure Sheet*.

But there are not enough bees to go around. An irate Horntoad clambers out of the pool and accosts you demanding its share. Before long, push has turned to shove and you find yourself in conflict with the beast, while the others are all fighting for their bee rations.

HORNTOAD	SKILL 8	STAMINA 8

After two Attack Rounds, you may flee from the Horntoad and *Escape* via the tunnel in the northern wall (turn to **142**). If you fight and slay the creature, the other Horntoads pause in their struggles and stare aghast at what you have done. Turn to **56**.

4

The floor of this large chamber is covered in fine sand, half-burying a selection of rusty mining equipment – shovels, picks, buckets and so on. If you want to take some sand with you to use for casting spells, then make a note of it on your *Adventure Sheet*. Three tunnels leave this chamber to parts unknown:

South	Turn to **82**.
East	Turn to **105**.
West	Turn to **76**.

5

The short passage enters a circular chamber containing an underground pond of green water. There are no other exits. In the pond, you can see tiny blind fish swimming about, and large numbers of strange faintly glowing spheres. The spheres are each about the size of your fist, with a white translucent outer surface and a darker centre. Do you want to wade into the pond and examine the spheres more closely (turn to **110**), or do you wish to leave this chamber and return to the junction (turn to **142**)?

6

The library is a small, cramped cave, with books and scrolls jammed into shelves carved into the rock, and piled up on the floor in stacks. Many of the texts are illegible to you, and in any case the ordering system itself defies understanding. However, chained to a brass lectern in a corner of the chamber is a useful old tome, bound in scaly reptilian hide of iridescent hue that is somewhat blackened and charred about the edges.

The Life Cycle of the Salamander, by Incendiare the Pyromancer, contains everything you need to know about these strange creatures. Originally denizens of the Elemental Plane of Fire, Salamanders have successfully established themselves in warmer areas across Titan. Their life cycle consists of three distinct stages. The first is a small, supposedly harmless, orange-coloured larval stage that resembles their lizard-like amphibian namesakes. The intermediate form is a much larger sulphur-yellow lizard-creature over a metre long, with weird gill structures and the ability to breathe fire at its foes. The adult stage is a fiery reptilian humanoid, around two to three metres in height, with cruel intelligence and a tendency to use black iron tridents in battle when not breathing out sheets of flame.

Like most supernatural creatures, Salamanders can be banished back to their home plane by speaking aloud their true name. On this page in the book someone has scrawled: “Is Xak the name of the Croaking Caves Salamander?” This is important lore! If in future you have the chance to speak the name Xak, add twenty to the paragraph number you have turned to, and consult this new paragraph number instead.

Now, if you have not already done so, you can visit the Inner Sanctum (turn to **104**) or the Holy Pool (turn to **71**), or you can leave this area entirely (turn to **100**).

7

After a short walk you come to yet another intersection of tunnels, again marked by the primitive runes of the Horntoads. Where will you go next? Bear in mind you cannot return to any place you have already visited, no matter how briefly.

The four vertical bars symbol	Turn to **96**.
The squirming lizard symbol	Turn to **64**.
The frog with a crown symbol	Turn to **188**.

8

A rousing cheer goes up from the emancipated miners throughout the cavern, as they are all freed from their captivity. Restore 3 LUCK points for your good deeds here in the Crystal Mines. The miners also shower you with gifts that they had hidden away during their enslavement. Add any of the following to your *Adventure Sheet*: 3 meals worth of Provisions, 14 Gold Pieces, and a coil of Rope. The miners cannot help you with the rest of your quest however, as there are still other slaves in the deeper levels of the Crystal Mines that need to be liberated. They begin arming themselves for a further assault on the Dark Goblin guards, but they wish you good luck as you leave this area. Turn to **100**.

9

After a short distance, the eastern passage enters a square stone chamber with moss-clad brick walls. Half of the room is taken up with an enormous and deep pool of clear water, and you are sure you can see something moving down there in the depths. Suddenly, a scaly hand shoots over the side of the pool and rakes its fingers across the floor! Will you flee this chamber and return to the junction and head north (turn to **120**), or will you stay and confront whatever is climbing out of the pool (turn to **40**)?

10

You slip while attempting the scale the cavern wall, and crash down to the floor with a painful bump! Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you want to try again and climb up to the beehive (turn to **35**), or have you had enough here and want to leave this cave via the northern tunnel (turn to **53**)?

11

Frantically, you search through your gear for your Knife, and then attempt to use it to sever the bonds around your wrists. Roll two dice and *Test your Skill*, adding two to the roll owing to your current predicament. If you are successful, you saw through your bonds, just as your unknown captor reaches the cave. You snatch up your weapon and launch an attack – turn to **32**. If you are unsuccessful, you cannot cut yourself free in time. Turn instead to **134**.

12

The Holy Pool of Throff is found in a large natural cavern whose walls and ceiling are covered in wavelike rock formations. The pool itself is a still body of pale green water, like a sheet of pure jade.

'Unbelievers are not allowed to bathe in the Holy Pool,' says Zhiamle. 'However, you can purchase potions distilled from the water's sacred essence.'

There are two potions available to buy here. If you wish to purchase one, simply cross off the relevant number of Gold Pieces and record the potion's details on your *Adventure Sheet*. You can only buy one of each potion. Each potion has one use only – once you have drunk it, cross it off your Adventure Sheet. You can drink a potion at any time except during combat. The potions are:

- Potion of Healing (Cost: 4 Gold Pieces): Drinking this potion will restore your STAMINA to its *Initial* level. It contains Essence of Blimberry and will also cure you of any diseases and their effects that you may be suffering from.
- Potion of Transformation (Cost: 6 Gold Pieces): Drinking this potion will enable you to transform into any roughly humanoid creature of approximately the same size and build. It is thus useful for infiltrating gatherings of hostile creatures, but it must be used carefully as its effects only last for a short time.

When you have finished any business here, you can either visit the Library of Throff if you have not done so already (turn to **85**), or leave this area (turn to **100**).

13

Mutton Fish are huge fish that live upstream in Lake Lumlé, with flesh so tasty and tender that those who eat it soon become hopelessly addicted to its flavour. In your case, there are other practicalities to consider, such as finding the Idol of Verlang and escaping from the Croaking Caves. So, you manage to stave off a crippling Mutton Fish addiction and can restore 2 STAMINA points instead. Return to **73** and make another choice.

14

As soon as you raise your weapon there is a whistling sound and a crossbow bolt shoots out from under the desk and buries itself in your stomach! Deduct 4 STAMINA points. You collapse to the floor, grimacing in pain. Hagla gets up – through tears of agony you see he is carrying a small crossbow in his hands – and walks around the desk to stand over you.

'Wot do you fink I am? Some sort of fool?' he gloats. 'How do you fink a merchant like me lives out 'ere in the wastes of Daddu-Yadu without being robbed? I got to protect myself somehow. By the way, the bolt was tipped with poison taken from the pollen of the Black Lotus. You've got about five seconds to live. Four. Three. Two. One...'

Your adventure is over...

15

'A moment,' you say to the Horntoad guards, who pull up sharply in confusion. 'I bring a gift...'

You hold up your Jar of Bees. Instantly, both guards drop their halberds in a clatter, and start drooling, excited by the frantic buzzing of the bees.

'I am a simple pilgrim seeking access to the shrine of the Frog God,' you tell the Horntoads. 'I offer these bees as payment.'

'I see no problem there,' says one guard dreamily, licking his lips with a fat pink tongue.

'Me neither,' agrees the other, panting with hunger.

You give the Jar of Bees to the Horntoad guards. Cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*. Immediately, they begin squabbling as to how best divide the bees fairly between them, forgetting all about you. Chuckling to yourself at the creatures' stupidity, you leave the cave via a tunnel in the far northern wall. Turn to **74**.

16

The mines themselves are a maze of low tunnels braced with crude beams of driftwood and bamboo. As you venture into the mines, a rusty portcullis drops from the ceiling and blocks your path of retreat. Simultaneously, you hear an alarm bell start ringing somewhere in the depths and the sounds of footsteps running down passageways towards you!

You could flee to the north, deeper underground (turn to **33**), or cast a spell:

WOK	PEP	MUD
170	**158**	**184**

17

The fight ends, and you are the victor! Merkurio congratulates you warmly: 'You are a master indeed! You have outpointed the great Merkurio! But you will find your skill has improved regardless, for Merkurio is a master and a teacher of masters!' Indeed, your SKILL score goes up by 1 point, and your *Initial* SKILL score is also raised by 1. Merkurio salutes you once more, stamps his foot and dives back into the pool. You leave this chamber and return to the junction, heading north. Turn to **120**.

18

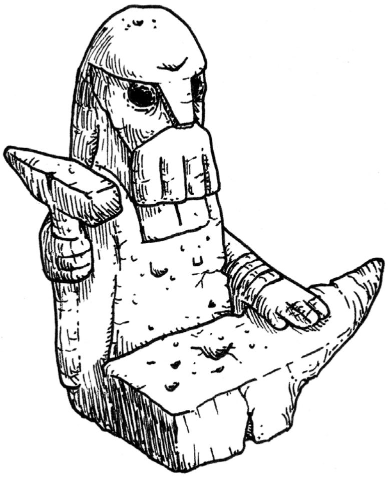
Zared has the following items which he has made, dug up or found while scavenging through the back tunnels and refuse pits of Daddu-Yadu. He will swap one meal for each item.

- Potion of Fire Water: This can be used as a spell artefact when casting certain magic spells.
- Ring of Flame: This will halve the STAMINA cost whenever you cast the HOT spell.
- Shroomshine Gourd: Drinking this home-brewed concoction of Zared's will restore your STAMINA to its *Initial* level. However, it will also make you drunk and you must deduct 1 SKILL point for the remainder of the adventure. The gourd contains enough for one dose only, so when you drink it, remember to cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*.

If you wish to swap anything with Zared, cross the meals off your Provisions on your *Adventure Sheet*, and record the item details for future use. Now, do you wish to swap any meals for knowledge that Zared has acquired (turn to **81**)? If you have no Provisions left, or do not wish to trade, turn to **69**.

19

The Sand Squid dies a messy death upon the now ink-stained sands. You have a choice of two tunnels leading deeper underground from this chamber. You can go north, via a wide, mud-floored passage (turn to **55**), or westwards, through a narrow crevice (turn to **70**).

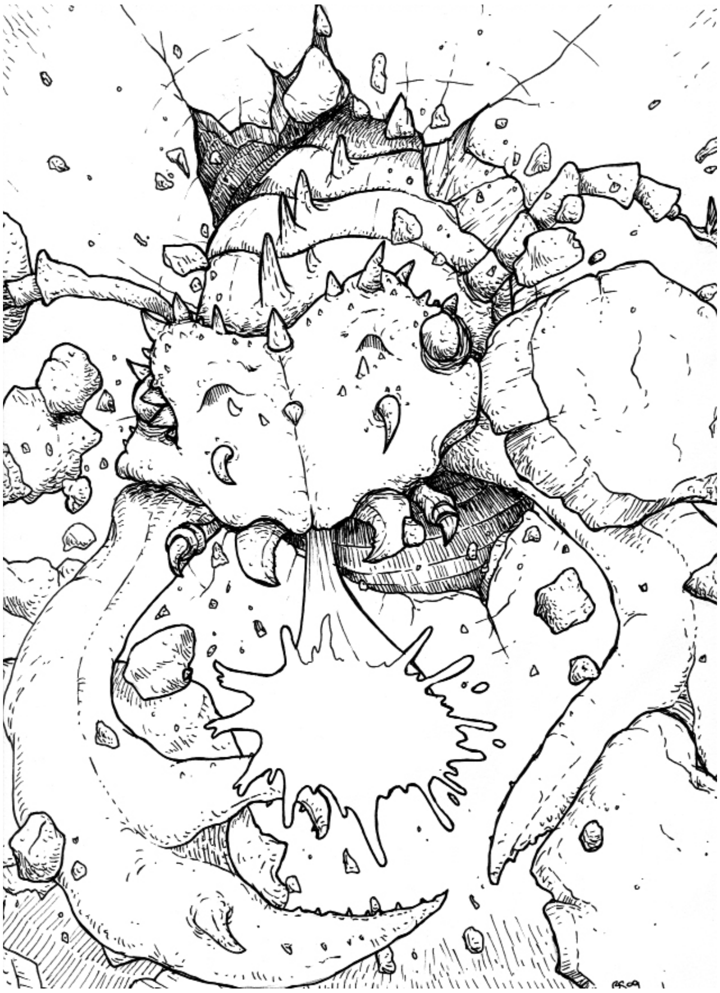


20

You fall down a pit in the mines and hurtle screaming through space to land with a splash in a pool of disgustingly foul-smelling water. Roll one die and deduct the result from your STAMINA score to reflect the injuries you suffered in the fall. Judging by both the stench and the presence of several bloated Horntoad carcasses, bobbing gently about in the ripples caused by your landing, you must now be in the dreaded Croaking Caves themselves! Turn to **65**.

21

With the guardian of the Inner Sanctum reduced to a pile of glittering rubble, you are free to loot the treasures of the Under-Temple. But wait! Aren't you supposed to be retrieving the Idol of Verlang rather than destroying the shrine of the mother goddess of your patron deity? Lose 2 LUCK points for your iconoclastic activities here!



Now, if you have not already done so, you can visit the Holy Pool (turn to **71**) or the Library of Throff (turn to **6**), or you can leave this area entirely (turn to **100**).

22

The flask contains a curative healing potion that restores 2 STAMINA points, or enough to raise your STAMINA to 10 – whichever is higher. You leave this chamber and return to the junction, heading northwards (turn to **120**).

23

From out of the warty multitudes a new hero emerges, eager to spill your blood in honour of the Horntoads of the Croaking Caves. Resolve this battle!

HORNTOAD SKILL 8 STAMINA 9

You cannot *Escape*. If you slay this Horntoad, turn to **90**.

24

You are advancing down a cave-tunnel leading north when you notice that the walls around you appear to be shaking and trembling violently. Suddenly, with a loud cracking noise, one of the tunnel walls is torn asunder and a gigantic insect-like monstrosity with a spiked carapace and long, grasping claws erupts out of the very rock itself. The sound of your footsteps has attracted the attention of a BADDU-BEETLE, a ferocious predator that infests the Baklands of Kakhabad! Without warning, the creature spits a viscous blob of acid in your direction. Roll two dice and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **101**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **135**.

25

You have slain the brood of beasts from the Elemental Plane of Fire. In the interests of doing a thorough job, you also stomp around the cavern destroying all the remaining egg sacs. It's disgusting work, but someone has to do it. Restore 2 LUCK points for your dedication in preventing a future infestation of Salamanders at Daddu-Yadu.

However, this dedication is pointless unless you find and destroy the original Salamander responsible for you being here in the first place. You leave the cavern and return to the junction, seeking a way onwards (turn to **7**).

26

Beyond the quicksand room is another large chamber, though this one contains a broad pool of limpid black water surrounded on all sides by a sandy beach. The rest of the cavern is completely full with all kinds of weird subterranean fungi – mushrooms, toadstools, puffballs, and the like. Before you can do anything however, a surprisingly cold wind blows in from nowhere, swirling the sand from the beach all around you. As you watch, the spiralling current of air becomes a focused column and forms a recognizable shape. Standing on the underground beach in front of you is a two-metre tall humanoid composed entirely of sand. With great clenched fists and a malevolent red glow in its eyes, the SAND GOLEM advances on you!

You can fight this magical guardian (turn to **140**), or cast a spell:

HOT	HUF	MUD
157	**191**	**179**

27

Hagla seems genuinely excited to strike a deal or two with you.

'Most of the Goblins in these parts have bugger all moolah to spend,' he says, shrugging his shoulders. 'Ere! Wot you fink of these magic artefacts? Nicked 'em off some luckless Analander who was staggering around out in the steppes. He won't be needing 'em anymore!'

You can sell any of the following to Hagla if you possess them, for the prices listed:

Item	**Cost**
Crystal Staff	15 Gold Pieces
Potion of Healing	3 Gold Pieces
Potion of Transformation	5 Gold Pieces
Crystal Jar	4 Gold Pieces
Chainmail Hauberk	10 Gold Pieces
Ring of Flame	4 Gold Pieces
Shroomshine Gourd	2 Gold Pieces

You can buy any of the following from Hagla if you wish, for the prices listed:

Item	**Cost**
Rope	4 Gold Pieces
Knife	2 Gold Pieces
Provisions	1 Gold Piece per meal
Bomba Fruit	2 Gold Pieces
Galehorn	4 Gold Pieces
Potion of Fire Water	5 Gold Pieces
Cloth Skullcap	4 Gold Pieces

Apart from Provisions, Hagla has only one of each item available to sell to you. The Rope, Knife, and Provisions are all self-explanatory. The Bomba Fruit will double the gain in STAMINA points if eaten along with a meal of Provisions (by itself it only restores 2 STAMINA points). The Galehorn, Potion of Fire Water, and Cloth Skullcap are all spell artefacts and may prove useful if casting spells.

When you have finished here and recorded all necessary alterations to your *Adventure Sheet*, you can leave. 'Pleasure doing business with you!' says Hagla. Turn to **75**.

28

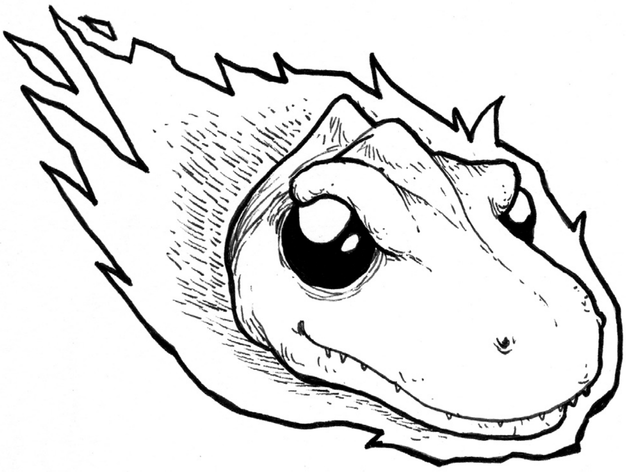
The fight ends, and Merkurio is the victor! He congratulates you on your performance: 'Of course you did not win! Do not feel bad. You could not be expected to win against the great Merkurio, but you did well.' Your SKILL score goes up by 2 points, and your *Initial* SKILL score is also raised by 2. Merkurio salutes you once more, stamps his foot and dives back into the pool. You leave this chamber and return to the junction, heading north. Turn to **120**.

29

You wait in vain for yet another geriatric monk to stagger out of the murk and accost you, but nothing happens. Looting the bodies of the slain priests yields 6 Gold Pieces, and you may also take the Crystal Staff of the librarian if you wish. If you use the Crystal Staff in combat instead of your war-hammer, you must deduct 1 from your Attack Strength as you are unfamiliar with the weapon. However, each successful hit with the Crystal Staff causes 3 STAMINA points of damage to your opponent.

The Under-Temple of Throff is a maze of subterranean cells and caves, but directions to several locations of interest are sign-posted with carven inscriptions into the rock. You can visit the following:

The Holy Pool	Turn to **71**.
The Inner Sanctum	Turn to **104**.
The Library of Throff	Turn to **6**.
Or you can leave this area now	Turn to **100**.



30

Although somewhat slow and clumsy, Horntoads are also big, strong, and powerful. In addition, not only are these two skilled with the use of their halberds, but they also have plenty of natural weaponry in the form of clawed fists, curving horns, and a gaping mouth full of sharp tusks. This will be a difficult battle!

	SKILL	STAMINA
First HORNTOAD GUARD	9	8
Second HORNTOAD GUARD	8	9

You cannot *Escape*. They will both attack you at the same time. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you. If you kill both the Horntoad guards, turn to **102**.

31

Carefully wading down the flooded tunnel, you enter a sunken grotto where the entire floor is submerged beneath a deep black pool of seawater. The water level is up to your stomach! There is another tunnel entrance in the far wall. Attempting to ignore the stench of stagnant brine, you gingerly stalk through the waters towards the other exit. Suddenly, a furious bubbling breaks the surface. Holding the lantern close to the surface, you peer down through the murk to see your leg about to be trapped by a barnacle-encrusted GIANT CLAM! Roll two dice and *Test your Skill*. If you are unsuccessful, turn immediately to **128**. If you are successful, turn instead to **83**.

32

Your captor is a GREMOLL, a giant humanoid newt some two and a half metres tall. Its skin is a sickly, slimey yellowish green, banded with darker stripes, with a tall fin-like crest that runs down its back, and a long tail that swishes through the air impatiently behind it. Worse still are its great golden bulbous eyes that regard your with a sinister glare. This one holds a bloodstained bone in one hand which it swings at you like a club. Defend yourself!

GREMOLL	SKILL 8	STAMINA 6

You cannot *Escape*. If you slay the carnivorous fiend, turn to **54**.

33

You are in an empty mine chamber where four corridors converge. A portcullis blocks the way southwards. An alarm bell rings insistently in the background, and you also hear Goblin voices yelling from somewhere nearby. You can head:

North	Turn to **82**.
West	Turn to **59**.
East	Turn to **127**.

34

As you wander down the corridor you hear the sound of running water, and soon enough you reach a cave on the banks of a subterranean stream. On the other side of the water is a beach, and from there a tunnel leading northwards. You are just pondering how best to cross the stream, when you are suddenly aware of something huge standing behind you. Too late, you try to turn around but great clammy hands grab you around the throat and throttle you until you loose consciousness…

Turn to **121**.

35

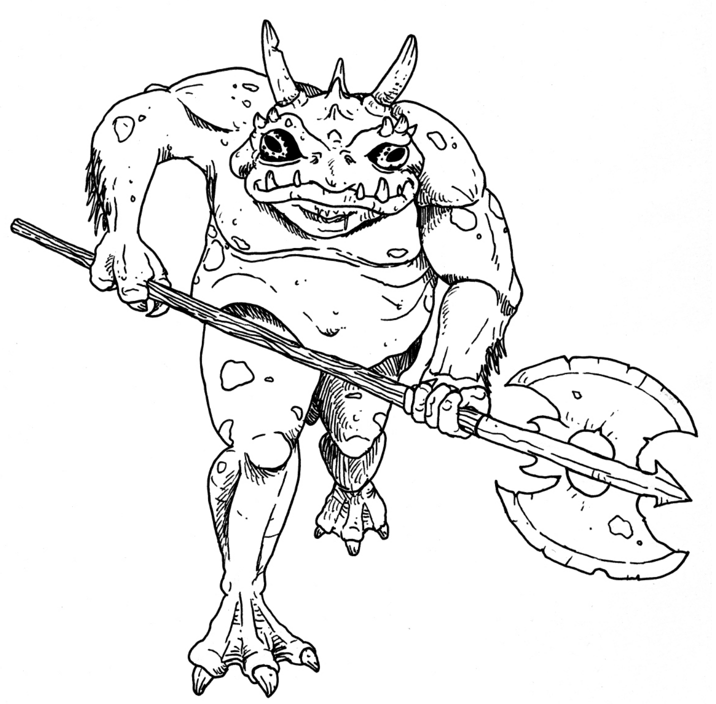
To get to the beehive will require a tricky climb up the cave wall. Roll two dice and *Test your Skill*. If you have some Rope, which you can use to help you make the climb, deduct 2 from the dice roll. If you are successful, you clamber up the rocky vertical surface to the hive (turn to **92**). If you are unsuccessful, turn instead to **10**.

36

Just when you think you may have beaten the slimy legions of Horntoads back enough to chance a run for the northern tunnel, another one leaps towards you on muscular legs, intent on rending you in two with great taloned paws. Defend yourself!

HORNTOAD	SKILL 9	STAMINA 9

You cannot *Escape*. If you kill this Horntoad, turn to **23**.



37

You hand over 2 Gold Pieces to Kasmanti (and don't forget to cross them off your *Adventure Sheet*). He passes you an old tome bound in scaly reptilian hide of iridescent hue that is somewhat blackened and charred about the edges.

The Life Cycle of the Salamander, by Incendiare the Pyromancer, contains everything you need to know about these strange creatures. Originally denizens of the Elemental Plane of Fire, Salamanders have successfully established themselves in warmer areas across Titan. Their life cycle consists of three distinct stages. The first is a small, supposedly harmless, orange-coloured larval stage that resembles their lizard-like amphibian namesakes. The intermediate form is a much larger sulphur-yellow lizard-creature over a metre long, with weird gill structures and the ability to breathe fire at its foes. The adult stage is a fiery reptilian humanoid, around two to three metres in height, with cruel intelligence and a tendency to use black iron tridents in battle when not breathing out sheets of flame.

Like most supernatural creatures, Salamanders can be banished back to their home plane by speaking aloud their true name. On this page in the book someone has scrawled: "Is Xak the name of the Croaking Caves Salamander?" This is important lore! If in future you have the chance to speak the name Xak, add twenty to the paragraph number you have turned to, and consult this new paragraph number instead.

You return the tome to Kasmanti. What else do you wish to do here? Consult more books on the following, remembering it will cost you 2 Gold Pieces per consultation?

Horntoads	Turn to **60**.
Other denizens of Daddu-Yadu	Turn to **94**.

If you do not wish to, or cannot afford to pay, you can either visit the Holy Pool if you have not done so already (turn to **12**), or leave this area (turn to **100**).

38

Standing two and half metres tall, with great rending talons and thick blubbery skin, the Tarator will be a very difficult opponent to defeat. Resolve this combat:

TARATOR SKILL 8 STAMINA 13

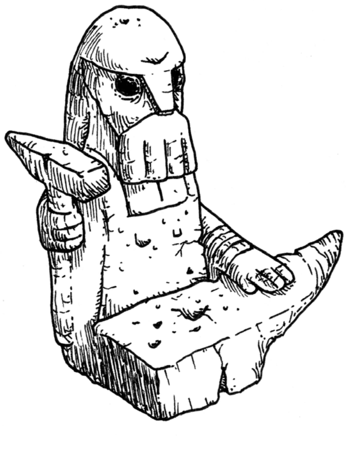
The Tarator's powerful clawed fists cause 3 STAMINA points of damage every time it wins an Attack Round. If it loses an Attack Round, it only suffers 1 STAMINA point of damage due to its leathery hide (unless you are using the Crystal Staff, in which case you inflict 3 STAMINA points of damage as per usual). If you wish to flee from the Tarator and *Escape* via a side passage in the western wall, turn to **78**. If you fight on and defeat the Tarator, turn to **91**.

39

As you draw your weapon, the creature bellows loudly and rushes at you. You must fight this FLAYER, who attacks by whipping its head violently from side to side. As it does so, its long tentacles spin at you. If they catch you they will sting you with nasty barbs that inflict 3 STAMINA points of damage per hit instead of the usual 2. Resolve your battle:

FLAYER SKILL 6 STAMINA 7

If you wish to flee from the Flayer and *Escape* back the way you came, turn to **142**. If you slay the Flayer, turn to **73**.



40

You draw your weapon as a peculiar figure emerges from the pool, trailing rivulets of water. You find yourself facing a man-sized fish – or perhaps it is a very fishy-looking man – in outlandish clothes with knee-high boots and a tall plumed hat. He petulantly stamps a foot upon the ground, salutes you with his rapier, and moves towards you. What will you do now?

Attack him	Turn to **95**.
Talk to him	Turn to **138**.

Or cast a magic spell:

TEL	WOK	HOT
166	**199**	**147**

41

You enter a huge cavern where an armoured RHINO-MAN guard wielding a barbed flail watches over a host of slaves – Dwarfs, humans, Black Elves, Klattamen, and even the odd Gnome or two. The slaves are clad in tattered rags and manacled together in small groups, mining an enormous glittering seam of translucent crystal with picks and hammers. Even as you enter, a trio of Dark Goblins brandishing swords erupts from another tunnel next to the Rhino-Man.

'There he is!' they scream, pointing at you. 'Kill the intruder!'

You can fight (turn to **89**), or cast a spell:

YOB	POP	PEP
190	**174**	**156**

42

You fail to apply the correct amount of pressure to the back of the chest's lid while you are opening it, and this releases a trigger that causes a small poisoned dart to shoot out of the chest and imbed itself in your torso. Roll one die and deduct the result from your STAMINA score. Inside the chest you find 10 Gold Pieces, a Chainmail Hauberk that is carefully preserved inside a waterproof oilskin package, and a scroll which says:

> *I.O.U. 200 Pieces of Gold. No hard feelings mate!*
>
> *Yours,*
> *Captain Bloodaxe*

Add what you wish to take to your *Adventure Sheet*. The Chainmail Hauberk fits you perfectly and you may wear this from now on to help protect you in battles. You can add 1 to your Attack Strength while wearing the armour, and it also helps minimize any damage you suffer. Roll one die every time you are wounded. If you roll a 5 or 6, the Chainmail will absorb most of the blow (deduct 1 STAMINA point instead of the normal 2). If you roll a 1 to 4, the damage will be as normal. When you have finished here, you clamber back over the stepping stones and head west. Turn to **70**.

43

Many of the caves on the southern part of the cliffs have been walled up with crude bricks and mortar. One cave, though, boasts two huge oaken doors, originally painted red, but now bleached and weathered through exposure to the elements. Carved into the stone lintel above the doors are symbols and runes dedicated to Throff the earth goddess. You could knock on the doors (turn to **79**), or cast a spell:

TEL	HUF	PEP
176	**194**	**152**

44

Whortle Soup is a creamy grey vegetable broth. It is hot and nourishing but it sometimes has a strange effect on people. Restore 2 STAMINA points, and roll one die. On a roll of 1-5 there is no effect, but if you roll a 6 then you suffer an allergic reaction and break out in itchy red blotches. Deduct 1 SKILL point for your discomfort. Return to **73** and make another choice.

45

The tunnel ends abruptly at a vertical sinkhole that leads up to the surface and down to the depths. In fact it ends so abruptly you that teeter for a moment on the edge, in serious danger of falling down into an unknown doom. Roll two dice and *Test your Skill*. Add two to the result if you have just *Escaped* from the Baddu-Beetle. If you are successful, turn to **103**. If you are unsuccessful, turn to **119**.

46

Frantically, you strain at your bonds, attempting to snap them through pure strength alone. Roll four dice. If you roll equal to or under your current STAMINA score, you are successful. The bonds break, just as your unknown captor reaches the cave. You snatch up your weapon and launch an attack – turn to **32**. If you roll over your current STAMINA score, you are unsuccessful, and cannot break free in time. Turn instead to **134**.

47

Although there are plenty of hand-holds, climbing up the sinkhole will not be an easy task. Roll two dice and *Test your Skill*. If you have some Rope, which you can use to help you make the climb, deduct 2 from the dice roll. If you are successful, you reach the entrance of the shaft, which is on a clifftop of the Earth End Coastline. You find a narrow path and follow it back down to the beach – turn to **100**. If you are unsuccessful, you slip and fall (turn to **119** and cross the Rope off your *Adventure Sheet* if you were using it).

48

With the Orc boss out of the way, you search the chamber for treasure. You disdain to take the Orc's whip which is a weapon that you are unfamiliar with. However, you do find a total of 10 Gold Pieces both on the body of the Orc and around the room. You also find 2 meals worth of Provisions, five jagged lumps of coal, and a stoppered Crystal Jar. Note whatever you wish to take on your *Adventure Sheet*. You leave the chamber. Turn to **75**.

49

'Bloody hell!' says Verrema. 'None of this moving silently business with you priests is there? Just stomp down the corridor and deal with whatever comes your way!'

Verrema will fight alongside you in the upcoming combat. Turn to **108** if you need a reminder on how to conduct battles between you and Verrema versus a creature, but make a note of paragraph **64** (or here) if you do so, as **108** will not guide you back there (or here).

Now return to **64** and resolve the battle.

50

'No matter,' he sighs. 'Merkurio knows well what it is like to be penniless. I will instruct you anyway, for the love of the art.' He offers you a drink from his flask and you accept. You instantly feel stronger; you regain 2 STAMINA points, or enough to raise your STAMINA to 10, whichever is higher. Merkurio salutes you and drops into an *en garde* position. 'Defend yourself!' he says. 'We shall test your skill!' You fight:

MERKURIO	SKILL 10	STAMINA 10

The fight is over when one of you has sustained three wounds. If you hit Merkurio three times, turn to **17**. If he hits you three times, turn to **28**.

51

The odour of wood-smoke comes trailing down the tunnel towards you. You have arrived at a kitchen of sorts. Herbs, vegetables, and meats are lying on tables around the centre of cavern and hanging from the walls. At the far end of the cave is a fireplace, the smoke from which exits through a natural vent in the ceiling. Suspended over the fire is a blackened pot full of bubbling broth, and standing next to it is a very odd-looking creature. It has a humanoid torso and legs but its head is a solid blob of quivering grey jelly and its eyes float loosely about in the 'front' of its face. Hanging down from its head on all sides are numerous long tentacles. These appear to be its hands (as it has no others) and it grips a ladle and stirring spoon. It stares at you apprehensively, waiting for you to make the first move.

You can fight this strange creature (turn to **39**), or cast a magic spell:

ROK	HOT	WOK
155	**177**	**145**

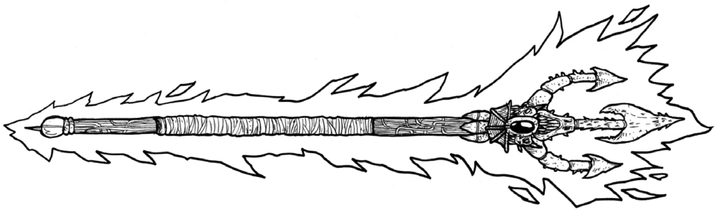
Or, you can leave it well alone, and return to the junction instead (turn to **142**).

52

As soon as they see you scramble over the edge of the cliff, the two DARK GOBLIN guards level their spears and charge towards you screaming battle-cries! You quickly get to your feet to meet their assault head-on.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First DARK GOBLIN	5	5
Second DARK GOBLIN	5	5

They will both attack you at the same time. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you. If you wish to flee the Crystal Mines and *Escape*, turn to **100**. If you defeat both the Dark Goblins, a quick search of their corpses reveals 3 Gold Pieces which you may take if you wish. Turn to **75**.



53

The tunnel arrives at a junction, where a dark, bone-strewn passage leads away to the east. If you want to continue following the northern tunnel, turn to **24**. If you want to head down the eastern passage, turn to **66**.

54

Hurriedly, you grab all your equipment and leave the lair of the Gremoll, down a long tunnel that opens, via a hidden entrance, onto the northern banks of the underground river that you came to before. Nearby is the other passage that you spied from the southern shore, before you were strangled by the Gremoll. The beast must have captured you and carried you across the river, thus saving you the trouble of fording it yourself. Suddenly, you hear weird booming cries coming from the river! Knowing that Gremoll often live in small groups, you quickly enter the adjacent passage and head north. Turn to **7**.

55

The muddy passage you have been following opens out into an expansive cavern containing a deep pool of liquid ooze that bubbles away to itself, filling the air with a sulphurous stench. What appears to be a line of stepping stones leads across the pool to the far wall, where you spot an old wooden chest. On your immediate left, another tunnel leads westwards. Will you walk across the stepping stones (turn to **116**), or will you take the western passage instead (turn to **70**)?

56

Ominous silence descends upon the cavern. From out of the ranks of the surprised Horntoads shambles a gargantuan creature that must be their champion. Fully two and a half metres tall, and almost as wide, the creature sports great curving horns like a buffalo. A network of scars and wounds across its warty flesh hints at a lifetime's experience worth of brutal savagery. This will be an epic conflict!

HORNTOAD CHAMPION SKILL 10 STAMINA 10

You cannot *Escape*. If you defeat the Horntoad Champion, turn to **23**.

57

Frantically you use your weapon in a desperate bid to free your badly lacerated leg from the vice-like grip of the Giant Clam. Roll two dice and *Test your Skill*. If you are using a warhammer, add 1 to the dice due to the ineffectual nature of this blunt instrument. If you are using a Knife, you may deduct 2 from the dice roll as you slip the blade between the jaws of the Clam's shell in an attempt to lever it open. If you are successful, turn immediately to **83**. If you are unsuccessful, the Clam grips your leg even more tightly. Deduct 1 STAMINA point. You can keep trying by *Testing your Skill* until you are either free or dead, or you can return to **128** and choose a magic spell to cast.

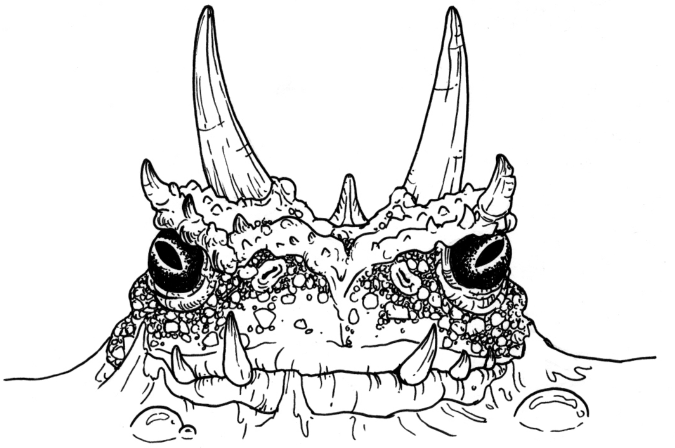
58

Quickly, you drink the Potion of Transformation (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and turn yourself into a Horntoad. The two Horntoad guards pull up sharply in surprise. They are not the smartest of creatures!

'Hey, brother,' croaks one in confusion. 'Did you just see a human around here somewhere?'

'Yup,' you reply. 'He just ran past me out of the cave. If you hurry you can still catch him!'

'Thanks, brother!' the Horntoad replies. He and his fellow guard race towards the cavern-mouth and the beach beyond.

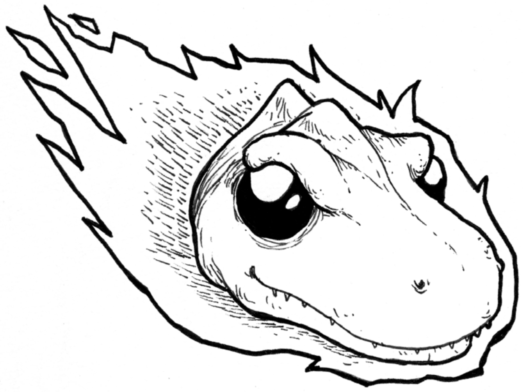


Chuckling to yourself at the creatures' stupidity, you leave the cave via a tunnel in the far northern wall, just as the effects of the potion begin to wear off. Turn to **74**.

59

You are in a dark, rubble-strewn corner of the mines. You also notice plenty of material here that is useful for casting spells. Add any of the following to your *Adventure Sheet* if you wish: two small pebbles and some stone dust. You can go:

North	Turn to **111**.
East	Turn to **33**.



60

You hand over 2 Gold Pieces to Kasmanti (and don't forget to cross them off your *Adventure Sheet)*. He passes you a collection of mouldy scrolls held loosely together by a length of black twine.

Collected Lore of the Swamp Beasts, by a shadowy figure known only as the Grey Mage, is a series of papers describing the various sentient amphibious humanoids that dwell in the marshes and fens of Titan. The scroll about Horntoads (apparently also known as Giant Horntoads by some authors) describes them as fat, toad-like creatures up to two metres tall, with great clawed hands and feet, a tooth-filled maw, and two curving horns rising from their skulls that give the creatures their name. They are warty and hideous to look at, with a fin-like crest running down the length of their back.

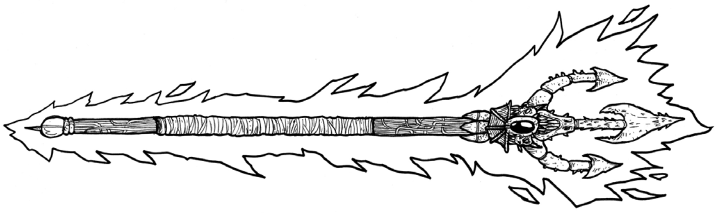
Horntoads generally eat whatever they can get their slimy paws on, but their favourite food is the humble bee. If in future you find yourself in the presence of a beehive and wish to try and catch some, deduct twenty to the paragraph number you have turned to, and consult this new paragraph number instead. Of course, you will need a container of some sort (not your backpack!) to keep them in.

You learn other facets of Horntoad lore such as their wide distribution across the Old World, from Gallantaria to Kakhabad. Apparently, their colony here in Daddu-Yadu represents a sizable congregation of the foul beasts. More interestingly, Horntoads go through a similar life cycle to that of their distant amphibian ancestors, though their tadpoles are both large and highly carnivorous!

You return the scrolls to Kasmanti. What else do you wish to do here? Consult more books on the following, remembering it will cost you 2 Gold Pieces per consultation?

Salamanders	Turn to **37**.
Other denizens of Daddu-Yadu	Turn to **94**.

If you do not wish to, or cannot afford to pay, you can either visit the Holy Pool if you have not done so already (turn to **12**), or leave this area (turn to **100**).



61

The tunnel opens out into a spacious, well-appointed chamber. The floor is covered in rugs made from Snattacat hide, and the heads of various creatures – a Baddu-Beetle, a Firefox, several Birdmen, and even a few unfortunate Klattamen – are mounted on the walls as hunting trophies.

The occupant of the room is a big Orc with a scarred face, wearing black studded leather armour and holding a barbed whip in one hand. On seeing you, he starts howling: 'Bleedin' yoomans! Come to steal me diamonds, by Hashak! I'll show you, or my name ain't Cap'n Morgul!'

You can fight (turn to **109**), or cast a spell:

HOT	ROK	WOK
187	**168**	**154**

62

With a final blow you dispatch the Skurasha, and its deflated carcass floats gently but rapidly down the sinkhole and out of sight. Restore 1 LUCK point for your victory here. You have a choice of two ways onward. You can enter a jagged crack in the wall leading eastwards (turn to **70**). Or, you can climb up the sinkhole and out onto the surface of the cliff (and from there back down to the beach). Turn to **47** if you favour this option.

63

You break off from the battle and run towards the exit. The Swordfish does not follow or press an advantage, but instead elects to hurl insults at your rapidly retreating back. 'That is right you coward! Run away! Your mother was an octopus and your father smelled of sea cucumbers!' it yells at you. You return to the junction and head north (turn to **120**).

64*

The corridor you are travelling down becomes distinctly warmer. Eventually it opens into a rocky, low roofed cavern, but before you can peer inside, a large sulphur-yellow lizard-like creature charges out of the cavern at you, jaws agape! The creature is a young carnivorous Salamander, with a taste for cooked meat that it burns itself with its own fiery breath! Defend yourself against this loathsome spawnling!

YOUNG SALAMANDER SKILL 6 STAMINA 7

If you wish to flee from this area and *Escape* back to the junction, turn to **7**. If the Salamander wins an Attack Round, roll one die. On a roll of 6 the creature has spat a great gobbet of flame at you and you must lose 4 STAMINA points instead of the usual 2. If you slay the young Salamander, turn to **141**.

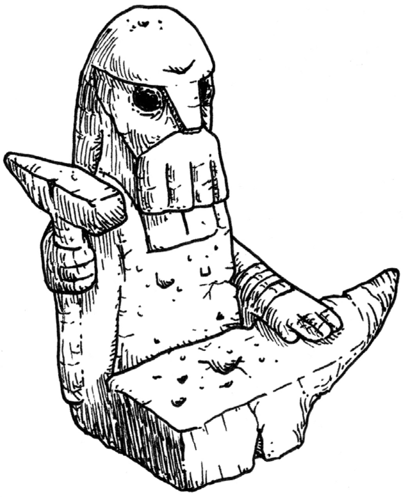
65

You are standing in the filth of the Horntoads' latrine. A fouler, more loathsome place you could not possibly imagine. Lose 1 STAMINA point just for the sheer awfulness of your surroundings. And yet there is life here. Slugs, worms, rats, cockroaches, maggots, flies, and indescribable tentacled things, are just some of the fauna lurking about in the muck.

And there are bigger things too! Alerted to your presence, the blubbery bulk of an enormous SLIME EATER hauls itself out of the putrid sludge and reaches for you with muscular arms. Blowing sulphurous steam from short breathing tubes on top of its head, the monster opens its great trough of a slavering mouth in anticipation of eating fresh meat! You will have to fight the creature:

SLIME EATER SKILL 7 STAMINA 11

If you wish to flee from the latrine and *Escape* via the sole exit, turn to **142**. If you kill the Slime Eater, turn to **93**.



66

You stride down a short passage into an enormous cavern strewn with the countless bones of hapless victims. Forewarned, you draw your weapon, moments before an immense grey-green warty monster stalks into the chamber from a side-cave. The thing is roughly humanoid with razor-sharp talons and a wattled maw full of broken tusks. Tiny red eyes gleam in the depths of its skull and, upon seeing you standing boldly on the cavern floor, it races forward with a roar of fury. It is a TARATOR, a cavern beast from the bowels of Titan, and you must fight it to the death (turn to **38**). Or, you could cast a magic spell:

YOB	MUD	ROK
175	**148**	**192**

67

You draw your weapon and advance towards the obstinate priest. He spits on the ground and holds his staff tightly, like a club. ‘So be it,’ he snarls. ‘Prepare to face the wrath of Throff!’

UNDER-PRIEST	SKILL 7	STAMINA 6

If you wish to flee the Under-Temple and *Escape*, turn to **100**. If you slay the Under-Priest of Throff, turn to **118**.

68

You find yourself in a small cave littered with boulders. At least, you think they are boulders until one of them opens a wide mouth and sinks its teeth into you leg! Deduct 1 STAMINA point. More of the boulders start to move towards you! You realize that you face a horde of GRANNITS – vicious little subterranean horrors with scuttling legs and a grey, stone-like armoured carapace. You will have to defeat two of them in order to leave this cave.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First GRANNIT	4	3
Second GRANNIT	4	3

You cannot *Escape*. They will both attack you at the same time. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you. Regardless of how many times you visit this cave, it is always teeming with Grannits. If you kill both of the creatures, you can leave:

North	Turn to **105**.
South	Turn to **127**.
West	Turn to **82**.

69

You say farewell to Zared the Hermit, and go to climb up the sinkhole and leave the Tunnels of Ooze.

‘Wait, young adventurer,’ croaks Zared. ‘There’s always an easier way.’

He pulls on a length of liana which releases a vine and bamboo ladder that unrolls itself from the top of the sinkhole.

‘I’m getting old,’ says the hermit. ‘I can’t go clambering around the rocks like a Mungie up a tree anymore.’

You thank the hermit and climb up the ladder to the top of the sinkhole. Soon, you reach the entrance of the shaft, which is on a cliff-top of the Earth End Coastline. You find a narrow path and follow it back down to the beach – turn to **100**.

70

The tunnel you have been following enters a circular chamber whose sandy floor is completely flat and featureless. Three other corridors, all similar to the one you have been trekking down, also enter this chamber, but on the northern wall, looking rather incongruous amidst these shadowy caverns, is a door fashioned from driftwood. You stride across the chamber towards it and immediately realize your mistake. The floor is a treacherous stretch of quicksand, and you have already started sinking up to your knees! Quickly, what will you do? Use some Rope (if you have some), and turn to **136**. Or cast a magic spell:

HUF	ROK	MUD
153	**189**	**171**

If you do not have any Rope, and cannot cast a spell, then you perish here in the Tunnels of Ooze, sucked beneath the quicksand to suffer a horrible fate. Your adventure is over...

71

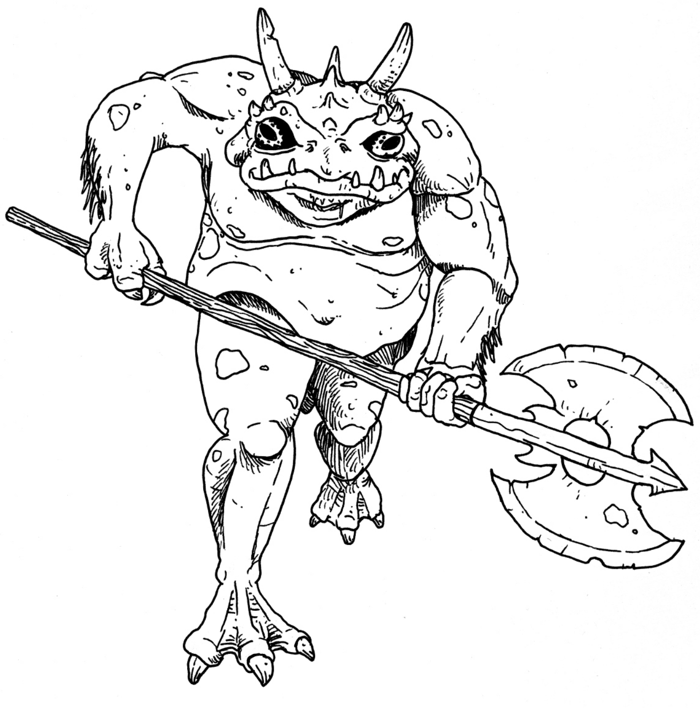
The Holy Pool of Throff is found in a large natural cavern whose walls and ceiling are covered in wavelike rock formations. The pool itself is a still body of pale green water, like a sheet of pure jade.

A battered wooden workbench by the pool contains a selection of potions and ointments in stoppered clay gourds. Two are labeled and look especially useful – if you wish to take both or either of them, record the potion's details on your *Adventure Sheet*. Each potion has one use only – once you have drunk it, cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*. You can drink a potion at any time except during combat. The potions are:

- Potion of Healing: Drinking this potion will restore your STAMINA to its *Initial* level. It contains Essence of Blimberry and will also cure you of any diseases and their effects that you may be suffering from.
- Potion of Transformation: Drinking this potion will enable you to transform into any roughly humanoid creature of approximately the same size and build. It is thus useful for infiltrating gatherings of hostile creatures, but it must be used carefully as its effects only last for a short time.

Now, if you have not already done so, you can visit the Inner Sanctum (turn to **104**) or the Library of Throff (turn to **6**), or you can leave this area entirely (turn to **100**).

72

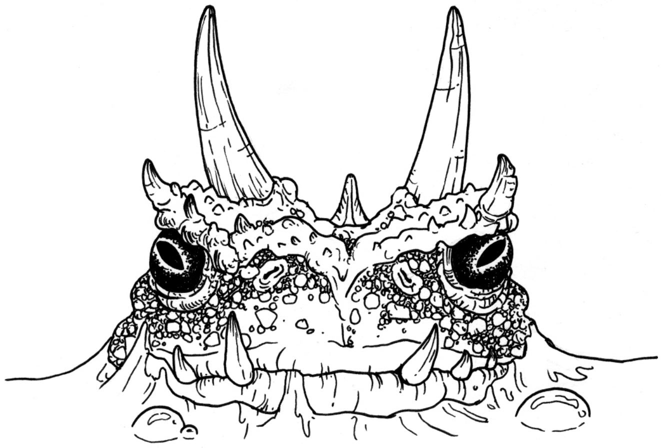


You know that bees are the favourite food of Horntoads, but do you have anything to catch and keep them in? If you have a stoppered Crystal Jar, turn to **117**. If you do not, you cannot catch and keep any bees. Return to **92** and follow all the instructions there, if you have not already done so.

73

With the inhuman cook out of the way, you are free to ransack the Horntoads' kitchen. There are no valuables here however, other than 1 Gold Piece, which you can add to your *Adventure Sheet*. On the other hand, there are plenty of different kinds of food, some of which you recognize. What will you try first? Bear in mind you cannot try something more than once.

A bowl of Whortle Soup	Turn to **44**.
A bag of Vittles	Turn to **2**.
A plate of Gloister and bread	Turn to **130**.
A haunch of Mutton Fish	Turn to **13**.
Or will you leave this area?	Turn to **142**.



74

The tunnel you are following reaches a junction. The main passage continues in a northerly direction. Another corridor leads eastwards. There is a lot of moisture here, and the floor of both corridors is covered in puddles of water. Do you want to go north (turn to **120**), or east (turn to **9**)?

75

The Crystal Mines are a series of rocky tunnels hewn into the hillsides where the uplands of the Vanti-Bak Wastes meet the Earth End Coastline. Three tunnels leading onwards are marked with crude scrawls by a Goblin or Orcish hand. Where will you go? Bear in mind you cannot return to any place you have already visited, no matter how briefly.

The tunnel marked "Boss"	Turn to **61**.
The tunnel marked "Mines"	Turn to **16**.
The tunnel marked "Gear"	Turn to **98**.
Or will you leave this area?	Turn to **100**.

76

This quiet and lonely part of the mine is overgrown with rusty-orange mould. You think it is harmless, but by the flickering light of your lantern it appears to be moving slowly towards you. Or maybe that's just a trick of your imagination... Hurriedly, you consider the two tunnels that lead out of here:

South	Turn to **111**.
East	Turn to **4**.

77

You have defeated the Swordfish. He throws you one last salute before he falls. When his body touches the floor, it changes form. His weapon and clothes vanish, leaving nothing but an ordinary fish. You search the room, apart from the deep pool, and find nothing except a silver flask. If you drink from the flask, turn to **22**. If you ignore it and leave, you return to the junction and head north – turn to **120**.

78

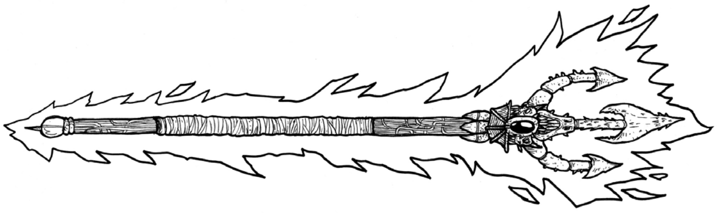
You follow a short, dark tunnel littered with bones that leads west, until it intersects a larger corridor running from south to north. Reasoning that going south will lead you back to the beach, you turn right and head north. Turn to **24**.

79

You step up and rap your knuckles on one of the doors. There is a faint sound of shuffling feet, and the door slowly opens inwards a little. Standing in the gap is a bald, bearded priest in long robes and holding a crystal-topped staff, which he lowers towards you in a menacing, spear-like manner.

'No visiting unbelievers!' he croaks. 'The Under-Temple is closed.'

Will you try and bribe your way into the temple (turn to **133**), or will you attack the priest (turn to **67**)? Or, you could leave this area entirely, and try somewhere else in Daddu-Yadu (turn to **100**).



80

Restore 1 LUCK point for slaying the Baddu-Beetle – a truly difficult foe! You see that the creature's tunnelling has churned up plenty of material here that is useful for casting spells. Add any of the following to your *Adventure Sheet* if you wish: four small pebbles, stone dust, and some sand. You head north along the tunnel (turn to **45**).

81

Cross 1 meal off the Provisions on your *Adventure Sheet* (which Zared greedily devours).

You tell the hermit that you have come to retrieve the Idol of Verlang and to slay the Salamander that dwells in the shrine of the Frog God. Zared chuckles nervously.

'Admirable sentiments indeed, young adventurer, but allow me to explain. You see, the Salamander isn't the main problem. A while back, I was digging about these caves as I tend to do, looking for artefacts and the like. I found an incredible trident, an ancient weapon and yet unmarked by time. Its design and manufacture were completely alien to me and certainly not human in nature. I summoned up a Salamander from the Elemental Plane of Fire – renowned trident specialists of course – to help me identify it, and the ungrateful creature broke its bonds of summoning, stole the trident and fled to the halls of the Horntoads.

I have since learned that the trident itself is imbued with some kind of demonic intelligence from the Pit, perhaps a bound Demon of some power, and it helped the Salamander escape from my summoning. Most extraordinary I think you'll agree. So you see, you may well defeat the Salamander, but then you will also have to destroy the trident.'

'How?' you ask the hermit, with some degree of incredulity.

'Oh, it shouldn't be too difficult,' says Zared. 'The bound Demon is powerful but fairly crude in style. You probably just have to defeat the animated trident in combat. The trick is simply realizing that after you kill the salamander you then have to deal with its weapon immediately.'

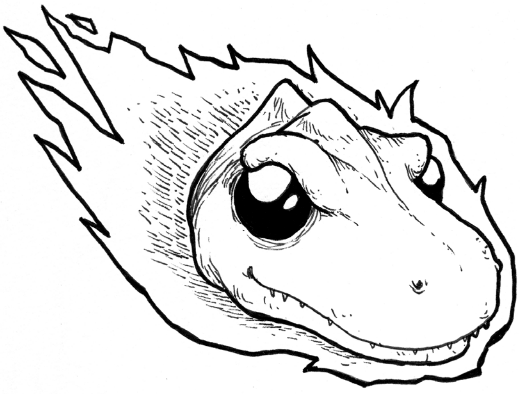
This is important lore! If in future you find yourself reading a paragraph that begins: "You have defeated the Salamander of the Croaking Caves!", deduct thirty from the paragraph number you are on at the time, and consult this new paragraph number instead, in order to deal with the trident.

Now, do you wish to swap any meals for items that Zared has procured (turn to **18**)? If you have no Provisions left, or do not wish to trade, turn to **69**.

82

The floor of this central chamber is treacherous and unstable, and dotted with pits and sinkholes. Roll two dice and *Test your Skill*. If you are unsuccessful, turn immediately to **20**. If you are successful, you manage to navigate your way past the hazards. Which direction are you headed in?

North	Turn to **4**.
South	Turn to **33**.
East	Turn to **68**.
West	Turn to **111**.



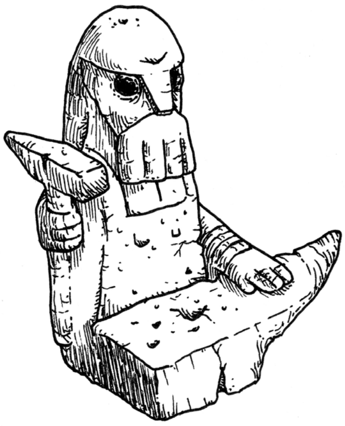
83

Having evaded the clutches of the Giant Clam, you make it to the other tunnel. This one is not flooded but has a floor of damp orange sand, and the constantly shifting surface makes walking difficult and laborious. After a short way it opens out into a smooth-walled cavern with several other exits. Before you can contemplate a way onwards however, a loathsome creature erupts from the sand and slithers towards you, burbling hatred from its many orifices. You face the tentacled, muscular form of a carnivorous SAND SQUID! Defend yourself against the beast!

SAND SQUID	SKILL 8	STAMINA 9

If you wish to flee from the Sand Squid and *Escape* via a side passage in the western wall, turn to **70**. However, if you stay and fight, you are hampered by the thick sandy floor and must decrease your SKILL by 2 points for the duration of this battle. If you defeat the Sand Squid, turn to **19**.

84



If you want to take a lesson in weapon-mastery from Merkurio the Swordfish, turn to **113**. If you decline, saying there must have been some mistake, turn to **132**.

85

To get to the Library of Throff, Zhiamle leads you past numerous empty cells cut into the rock.

'Most of the priests have left here to help rebuild Shalla's Temple out on the Klatta-Bak Steppes,' says Zhiamle, watching you looking at the derelict living quarters. Just myself and old Kasmanti remain to hold the fort so to speak.'

Kasmanti turns out to be the Arch-Librarian – another ancient priest with a beard longer than that of Zhiamle, and a staff topped with a weird star-shaped crystal. The library is a small, cramped cave, with books and scrolls jammed into shelves carved into the rock, and piled up on the floor in stacks.

'A visitor, seeking lore!' says Zhiamle to the librarian.

'It's not cheap,' says Kasmanti gruffly. 'It will cost you 2 Gold Pieces per consultation.'

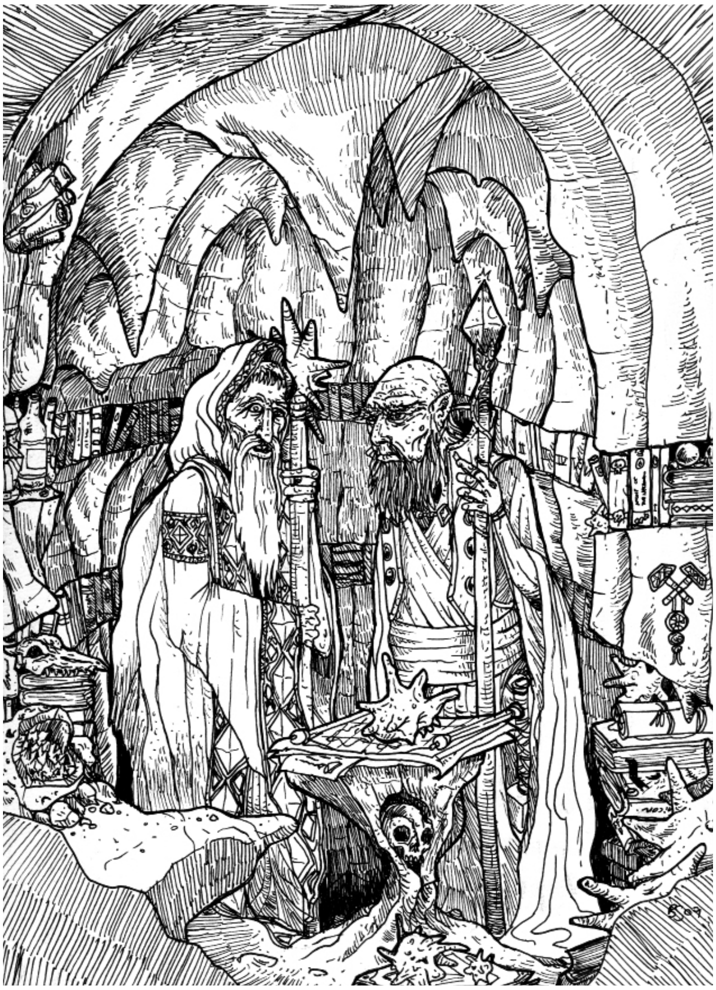
What are you interested in?

Horntoads	Turn to **60**.
Salamanders	Turn to **37**.
Other denizens of Daddu-Yadu	Turn to **94**.

If you do not wish to, or cannot afford to pay, you can either visit the Holy Pool if you have not done so already (turn to **12**), or leave this area (turn to **100**).

86

Having slain all the denizens of the pond, you search carefully about for anything of interest, taking care to avoid what you now know to be the eggs of the Horntoads. There are certainly plenty of weed-clad bones here, human or otherwise, so you can see what the tadpoles were being raised on. In the further reaches of the pond you make an incredible find. Still clasped in the skeletal hands of what looks like a Dwarf, is a war-hammer whose pristine and non-corroded condition suggest that it is definitely magical! Add the Enchanted War-Hammer to your *Adventure Sheet*. It adds one to your Attack Strength when used in combat. However, it is also imbued with the berserker nature of Dwarven war gods and you may never *Escape* when you wield it in a battle. Pleased with your find, you leave the hatchery and return to the junction (turn to **142**).



87

The entrance to the Croaking Caves, lair of the Horntoads and shrine of the Furlakk the Frog God, is a wide cavern-mouth that reeks with an especially foul odor. Yellow slime drips from the walls, and small crabs and black isopods skitter away into the darkness. No sooner have you entered the cavern then a deep, doom-laden voice croaks out: 'Intruder! Intruder!'. You have been spotted by Horntoad guards!

Two of them half-hop, half-run towards you on powerful limbs, brandishing immense double-bladed halberds. They are disagreeable creatures to look at, resembling enormous toads with brown-grey warty skin. A spiny crest runs down their backs, and a pair of horns grows outwards from the top of their heads.

You can fight them (turn to **30**), offer them a Jar of Bees (turn to **15**), drink a Potion of Transformation (turn to **58**), or cast a magic spell:

PEP	TEL	HUF
143	**169**	**196**

88

Your Rope lasso fails to snag the door-handle and you spend some time fitfully thrashing about in the quicksand attempting to steady yourself for another go. Not only is this making you sink quicker, but it is also exhausting. Deduct 1 STAMINA point for your exertions. Now, will you try again to use the Rope as a lasso (turn to **136**), or will you instead cast a spell (in which case return to **70** and choose a magic spell option given there)?

89

When they see you taking on four guards at once, the slaves of the Crystal Mines let out a rousing cheer that stirs your blood! Unfortunately, as they are all manacled together, none of them can help you in your desperate struggle. This will be a difficult fight!

	SKILL	STAMINA
RHINO-MAN	8	9
First DARK GOBLIN	6	5
Second DARK GOBLIN	5	5
Third DARK GOBLIN	5	4

You cannot *Escape*. Fight them two at a time. Each pair will attack you simultaneously. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you. If you kill them all, you take a ring of keys from the belt of the dead Rhino-Man and begin to free all of the mining slaves. Turn to **8**.

90

No sooner have you killed one leathery Horntoad then another takes its place, bellowing a battle-call with its distended throat-sac, as it crawls from out of the batrachian rabble. Once again you are fighting for your life!

HORNTOAD SKILL 9 STAMINA 8

You cannot *Escape*. If you defeat this Horntoad, turn to **36**.

91

You have defeated the Tarator! Add 1 LUCK point for your victory. Searching the creature's lair – a shallow cave adjoining the main cavern – yields little other than 3 Gold Pieces and a Giant Tooth, which you can add to your *Adventure Sheet* if you wish. Two tunnels leave this cavern and head deeper underground. You can go west (turn to **78**), or north (turn to **70**).

92

You reach the beehive. The bees swarm around you but you are powerless to defend yourself as you must use your hands to hold onto the rocky cavern wall. Roll one die. If you roll a 1 to 4, then this is the number of STAMINA points you lose as the bees sting you. If you roll a 5 or 6, you are lucky and avoid being stung. You knock the hive to the ground, and clamber down after it. Cutting open the hive provides you with enough honey for one Provision (don't forget to record it on your *Adventure Sheet*). You leave the humming cave, now full of agitated bees, via the northern tunnel (turn to **53**).

93

The corpse of the Slime Eater falls backwards into the slime with a splash, where it is immediately set upon by a feculent host of smaller creatures. You have already decided that there is nothing further to be gained in this abominable grotto, and move to leave via the lone exit tunnel. However, two things have happened to you here whose effects you cannot ignore.

Firstly, all of the food you may be carrying has been spoiled and contaminated. Cross all and any Provisions off your *Adventure Sheet* as they are now tainted and inedible.

Secondly, you have contracted a dread Wasting Disease through exposure to the germs in the latrine. The effects of this plague are especially virulent when you are subjected to intense physical activity, such as a battle. For the rest of your adventure, you must deduct 1 STAMINA point every time you are involved in combat, whether you win or *Escape*. Note these details on your *Adventure Sheet*.

You leave the latrine of the Horntoads. Turn to **142**.

94

You hand over 2 Gold Pieces to Kasmanti (and don't forget to cross them off your *Adventure Sheet*). He passes you a well-thumbed grimoire with a worn cover.

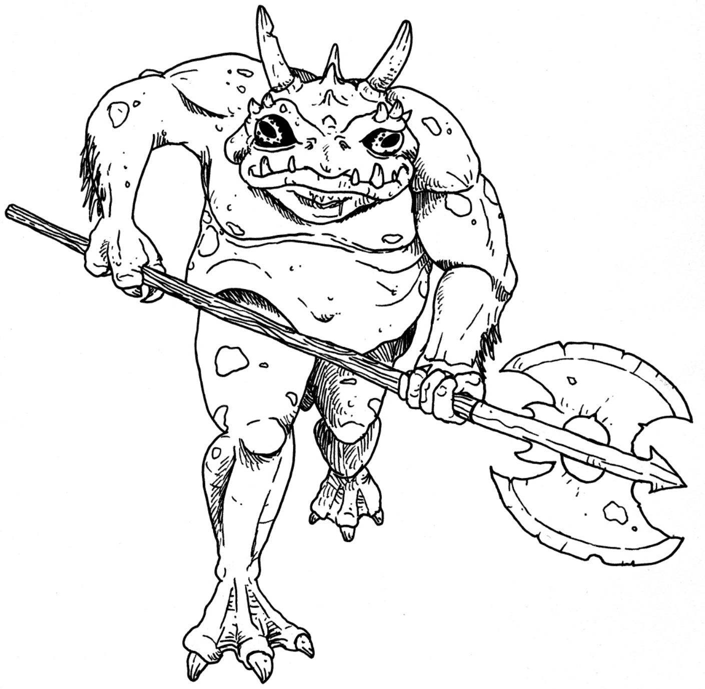
People of Daddu-Yadu, by Fenestra of Snatta, is an account of the various personalities who have visited or made their homes in the Croaking Caves region. Thus there are pages devoted to both Throff-worshipping luminaries such as Colletus the Holy Man and Shalla the Proselytizer, as well as more secular visitors, including Shadrack the Hermit and the fearsome Dintainta of the Steppes.

You are especially intrigued by an ancient sage dedicated to Hamaskis, god of knowledge, who has made his home among the horrors of the Tunnels of Ooze. This sage, known simply as Zared, has decreed it his life's work to study the secrets of Daddu-Yadu – its people, lore, history and treasures. Apparently, he dwells in a cavern full of giant fungi. If in future you find yourself in such a place and wish to contact Zared, add fifty to the paragraph number you are on at the time, and consult this new paragraph number instead.

You return the grimoire to Kasmanti. What else do you wish to do here? Consult more books on the following, remembering it will cost you 2 Gold Pieces per consultation?

Horntoads	Turn to **60**.
Salamanders	Turn to **37**.

If you do not wish to, or cannot afford to pay, you can either visit the Holy Pool if you have not done so already (turn to **12**), or leave this area (turn to **100**).



95

The fish-creature laughs grimly as you brandish your weapon. 'Defend yourself, arrogant one,' it burbles in a reedy voice. 'I, Merkurio the SWORDFISH, am a master of the blade, as you shall soon discover!' Resolve this combat:

SWORDFISH	SKILL 10	STAMINA 10

If you wish to flee from the Swordfish and *Escape* via the way you came, turn to **63**. If you defeat the Swordfish in battle, turn to **77**.

96

The tunnel arrives at a circular chamber that functions as the Horntoads' gaol. Small doorways barred with iron gates look into several tiny prisoners' cells, most of which are empty. There doesn't seem to be any sign of a gaoler.

Suddenly, a ruckus starts up in one of the cells. 'Let me out! Let me out!' You peer through the bars and see a Black Elf maiden, clad in spiked armour, striking the ground with a scimitar. On seeing you, she rushes to the door of her cells and shakes it violently.

'Please! You've got to let me out of here!' she begs. Unfortunately, the cell is securely locked, and you have no key. You can cast a magic spell:

PEP	POP	YOB
186	**150**	**193**

Or you can abandon her to her fate, and return to the junction (turn to **7**).

97

You manage to apply the correct amount of pressure to the back of the chest's lid while you are opening it, and thus avoid triggering whatever the trap was. Inside the chest you find 10 Gold Pieces, a Chainmail Hauberk that is carefully preserved inside a waterproof oilskin package, and a scroll which says:

> *I.O.U. 200 Pieces of Gold. No hard feelings mate!*
> *Yours,*
> *Captain Bloodaxe*

Add what you wish to take to your *Adventure Sheet*. The Chainmail Hauberk fits you perfectly and you may wear this from now on to help protect you in battles. You can add 1 to your Attack Strength while wearing the armour, and it also helps minimize any damage you suffer. Roll one die every time you are wounded. If you roll a 5 or 6, the Chainmail will absorb most of the blow (deduct 1 STAMINA point instead of the normal 2). If you roll a 1 to 4, the damage will be as normal. When you have finished here, you clamber back over the stepping stones and head west, turn to **70**.

98

The tunnel opens out into a small cave that is absolutely crammed to capacity with an assortment of artefacts, equipment, trinkets and plain junk. Sitting behind a desk in the middle of the cave is an aggressive-looking Man-Orc – a SVINN from the village of Torrepani in the Shamutanti Hills. He wears a heavy blue robe and does not appear to be armed, though you cannot see his hands from where you stand as they are folded on his lap behind the desk.

'Wotcha traveller!' says the Svinn. 'I be Hagla the Unbidden, sole licensed trader for the Crystal Mines on orders of the Clan of the Gaping Maw. Can I interest you in anyfink to buy on this fine day?'

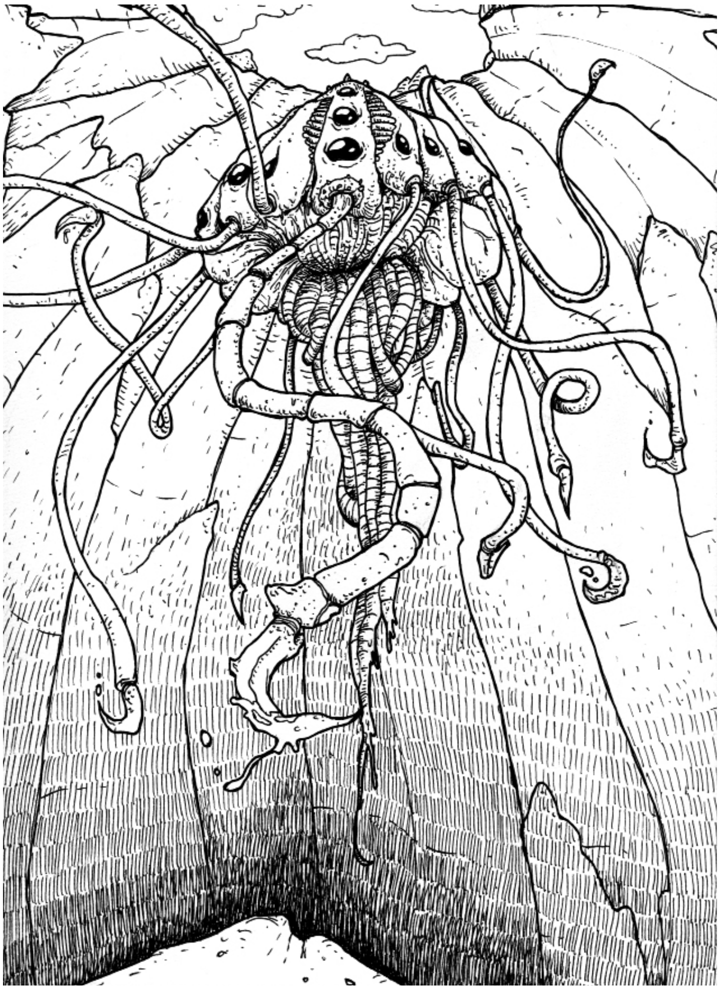
Do you want to trade with Hagla (turn to **27**), or do you want to attack the merchant instead (turn to **14**)?

99

'Fight, fight, and fight!' mutters Verrema under her breath. 'I should have joined the army and become a mercenary solider and be done with it. Whatever happened to sneaking around and stabbing things in the back? That's what I want to know!'

Verrema will fight alongside you in the upcoming combat. Turn to **108** if you need a reminder on how to conduct battles between you and Verrema versus a creature, but make a note of paragraph **114** (or here) if you do so, as **108** will not guide you back there (or here).

Now return to **114** and resolve the battle.

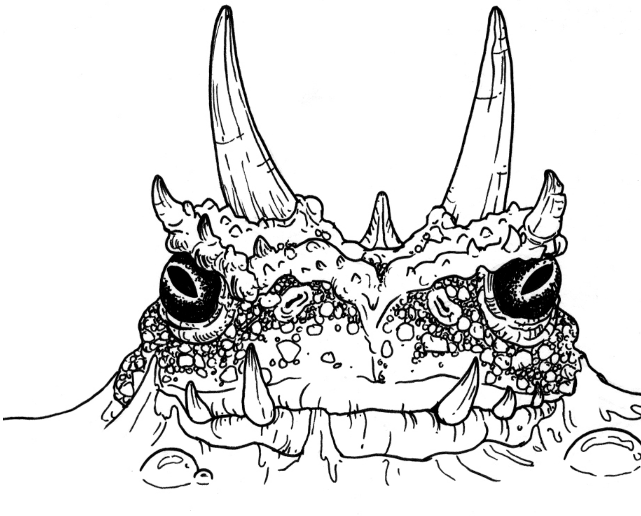


100

Once again you find yourself standing on the sands of the Earth End Coastline, pondering a way onwards. You also notice plenty of material here that is useful for casting spells. Add any of the following to your *Adventure Sheet* if you wish: three small pebbles, stone dust, and some sand. Then, choose – where will you go? Bear in mind you cannot return to any place you have already visited, no matter how briefly.

The Under-Temple of Throff	Turn to **43**.
The Crystal Mines	Turn to **125**.
The Tunnels of Ooze	Turn to **149**.
The Croaking Caves	Turn to **87**.

101



The creature's acidic saliva misses you and hits a wall, where it begins to sizzle and dissolve its way through the rock. Meanwhile, the beetle heaves its black chitin-clad bulk out from its burrow and scuttles down the tunnel to attack you with its serrated and claw-like mandibles! Defend yourself!

BADDU-BEETLE SKILL 7 STAMINA 9

If you wish to flee from the Baddu-Beetle and *Escape* by running northwards up the tunnel, turn to **45**. Fight the battle as normal, except that every time you wound the beetle, it will respond by angrily spitting virulent acid at you. Roll one die and consult the following table to see whether this acid spit hits you:

Roll	**Effect**
1	Hits you in the face. Lose 3 STAMINA points and 1 LUCK point.
2	Hits your weapon arm. Lose 2 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point.
3	Hits your other arm. Lose 2 STAMINA points.
4	Hits your leg. Lose 1 STAMINA point.
5-6	Misses.

If you slay the Baddu-Beetle, turn to **80**.

102

With both the guards defeated, you perform a quick search of their sentry post. You find little of interest however, other than 2 Gold Pieces, and half a cooked fish that counts as 1 meal worth of Provisions. Add what you want to your *Adventure Sheet*. You then leave the cave via a tunnel in the northern wall, and head deeper into the Croaking Caves. Turn to **74**.

103

Just in time, you step back from the abyss, breathing deeply in relief. A couple of rocks clatter down the sinkhole, dislodged by something above. You look up, and the creature you see floating down the hole towards you is so nightmarish that it freezes you to the spot! The thing resembles a gigantic jellyfish, with a bloated sac-like body studded with numerous jet-black eyes, and a writhing host of tentacles, all tipped with various stings, barbs, and hooks. This loathsome horror is a Skurasha, and normally a servant of the Demon Princes. What this one is doing here is anyone's guess, but it has now found you and demands you flesh as sustenance! The battle commences:

SKURASHA SKILL 8 STAMINA 11

If you wish to flee from the Skurasha and *Escape* by entering a jagged crack in the wall leading eastwards, turn to **70**. If you ever roll a double one for your Attack Strength, you have slipped and fallen down the sinkhole – turn to **119** immediately. If you defeat the Skurasha, turn to **62**.

104

The Inner Sanctum of Throff is an incredible cavern of rune-inscribed crystal pillars and an altar hewn from a gigantic boulder of greenstone. No unbeliever has ever set foot here and lived, partly due to the secretive nature of the priests of the Earth Goddess, and partly due to the temple's own natural defences.

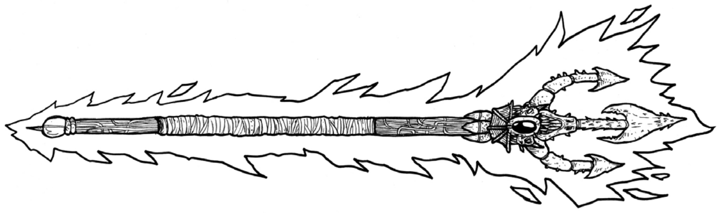
Even as you stand in awe of the sanctum's splendour, a tall glimmering idol perched by the altar suddenly animates, and strides forward to deal with the desecrator – you! You face a CRYSTAL WARRIOR! You can cast a spell:

POP	HOT	YOB
178	**165**	**159**

Or fight!

CRYSTAL WARRIOR SKILL 11 STAMINA 13

If you wish to flee the Under-Temple and *Escape*, turn to **100**. Your war-hammer is the perfect weapon to fight the Crystal Warrior. If you no longer have it, you die here in the sanctum, under a rain of blows from the idol's crystalline fists. If you destroy the Crystal Warrior with your war-hammer, turn to **21**.



105

The dusty floor of this chamber shows many footprints of miners passing along this way. A faint breeze blows from a corridor leading north – this could be an exit. If you want to head this way, turn to **41**. Alternatively, there are two other dark tunnels you could travel down:

South	Turn to **68**.
West	Turn to **4**.

106

Long before you reach the end of the corridor, you can already smell what lies in store. You have arrived at an irregular-shaped cavern that serves as the latrine of the Horntoads! The stench is horrendous! You fight down the urge to vomit, but must lose 1 STAMINA point regardless. The ceiling is dotted with sinkholes carrying waste from across Daddu-Yadu, and the place is full of unbelievable filth: slime, excrement, sludge, dung and dregs. Will you actually dare enter such a disgusting place (turn to **65**), or will you return to the intersection instead (turn to **142**)?

107

You have defeated the Salamander of the Croaking Caves! But you also remember the warning of Zared the Hermit, and spin around just in time to see the Salamander's trident rise up off the floor and streak towards you like some horrific metal hornet. It is extremely fast, but if you can hit it a couple of times then you will break the enchantment that animates it and render it inert. Defend yourself one last time!

TRIDENT OF DOOM SKILL 10 STAMINA 4

There is no *Escape* from here! If you destroy the demonic Trident, turn to **200**.

108

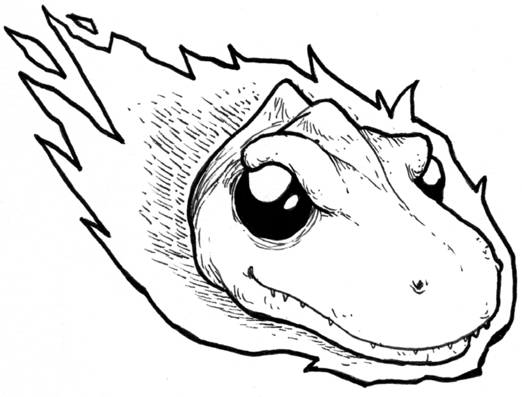
To your relief, the Black Elf lowers her weapon, convinced by your story.

'Sorry,' she says. 'Going a bit paranoid in here. Know what I mean? My name is Verrema. I'm a thief, I mean, an adventurer, well, I was until I got caught by those Horntoads. How about I help you get out of here?'

Verrema will accompany you for the rest of the adventure. While she is with you, watch the paragraph numbers. If there is an asterisk (*) next to the number, subtract 15 from that reference and turn to the new paragraph number to see what Verrema has to tell you. Verrema will also join in any battles you face in the caves. Her attributes are SKILL 8, STAMINA 8. If you face only one opponent, you will gain two Attacks (yours and Verrema's), both of which can injure your opponent. If your opponent causes a wound, roll a die: on a 1-3 you are wounded, and on a 4-6 Verrema is wounded (this also applies to *Escape* penalties if the two of you decide to flee). If you face multiple opponents which you fight one at a time, then you can either attack alternate creatures, or you can both gang up on each opponent as you work your way through the battle-order. Keep a careful check on Verrema's STAMINA score as if she dies then you must continue on alone (obviously losing any benefits gained by having the Black Elf accompany you). You can however give Verrema Provisions or a Potion of Healing to restore her STAMINA score if you wish.

For now, you return to the junction, along with your new companion. Turn to **7**.

109



The GREAT ORC advances, cracking his whip. This is his idea of sport! With his other hand, he grabs a scimitar off the wall. Resolve your battle with Captain Morgul, Overseer of the Crystal Mines!

GREAT ORC SKILL 7 STAMINA 8

He will constantly try to catch you with his whip during the fight. Roll one die for him before you start each Attack Round. A roll of 1 means that he has snared you with his whip and you must deduct 3 SKILL points for the next three Attack Rounds while you fight to free yourself. If you wish to flee this area and *Escape* (as long as you are not entangled in the Orc's whip), turn to **75**. If you slay Captain Morgul, turn to **48**.

110

You wade into the pond and pick up one of the spheres. It is made from a soft, jelly-like substance, and you peer into its depths as if it were a crystal ball. Unfortunately, it is actually an egg of the Horntoads that is on the cusp of hatching! The heat from your hands causes the dark centre – a tadpole as long as your thumb – to uncoil, burrow rapidly through the outer layers of the egg, and bite you on the nose with well-developed toothy jaws, before disappearing into the waters of the pond! Deduct 1 STAMINA point.

Too late you realize you are in the hatchery of the Horntoads and that the waters around you are full of their voracious flesh-eating larvae. As if on cue, a KILLER TADPOLE as long as your arm bites you again and takes a chunk out of your kneecap! Deduct another STAMINA point. Gripping your weapon tightly you set about defending yourself against the Horntoads' savage spawn! Fight them one at a time:

	SKILL	STAMINA
First KILLER TADPOLE	3	2
Second KILLER TADPOLE	2	3
Third KILLER TADPOLE	2	2
Fourth KILLER TADPOLE	3	3
Fifth KILLER TADPOLE	4	3

If you wish to flee the hatchery and *Escape* back to the junction, turn to **142**. During this battle you must deduct 2 from your Attack Strength as your movements are hampered by the deep water you are standing in. If you fight on and destroy all the Killer Tadpoles, turn to **86**.

111

Three tunnels meet in a rocky mine shaft where several unfortunate slaves were killed by a cave-in. Among the skeletons, you see one that appears to be that of a Giant. You may take a Giant Tooth if you wish, and add it to your *Adventure Sheet*. To leave this place of death, you can go:

North	Turn to **76**.
East	Turn to **82**.
South	Turn to **59**.

112

You are in a cavern full of giant fungi clustered around a dark pool. Aside from the door you came through, the only other exit is an adjoining sinkhole that leads up to the surface and down to the depths. Rather than go back the way you came, to decide to ascend via the rocky walls of the shaft. Turn to **47**.

113

You pay Merkurio 2 Gold Pieces (and cross them off your Adventure Sheet). He offers you a drink from his flask and you accept. You instantly feel stronger; you regain 2 STAMINA points, or enough to raise your STAMINA to 10, whichever is higher. Merkurio salutes you and drops into an *en garde* position. 'Defend yourself!' he says. 'We shall test your skill!' You fight:

MERKURIO SKILL 10 STAMINA 10

The fight is over when one of you has sustained three wounds. If you hit Merkurio three times, turn to **17**. If he hits you three times, turn to **28**.

114*

Raising your weapon high, you charge forward across the shrine towards the Salamander, screaming an ancient battle-hymn dedicated to Verlang, god of smiths. The Salamander responds by breathing out a great gout of flame into the air and spinning its trident around in a wide arc that attempts to impale you on its barbed tines. The battle is joined!

THE SALAMANDER SKILL 10 STAMINA 10

There is no *Escape* from here! Every second Attack Round, the Salamander will breathe fire at you, in addition to attacking with its trident. You must roll two dice and *Test your Skill*. If you are successful, you have dodged the flames and there is no effect. If you are unsuccessful, the flames burn you and you must deduct 2 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point for your troubles. If you are victorious in your struggle with the Salamander of Daddu-Yadu, turn to **137**.

115

'Lies! Lies! Lies!' howls the Black Elf, charging towards you with her scimitar raised. 'You're another demon sent to torment me! Die you scum!' The poor creature has obviously been sent insane by the horrors of her confinement. Defend yourself!

BLACK ELF WARRIOR-WOMAN SKILL 8 STAMINA 8

You cannot *Escape*. If you defeat the Black Elf maiden, turn to **129**.

116

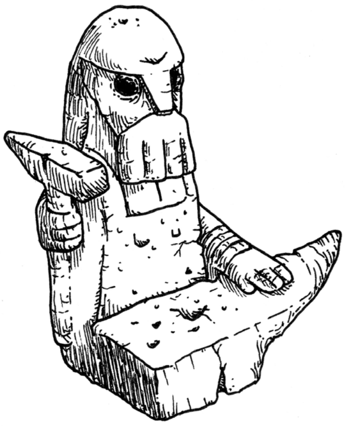
You are half-way across the stepping stones when an enormous brown-scaled lizard-like creature, with a spiny crest that runs around its head and down its back to the end of its tail, surfaces in the mud pool amid a froth of stench-laden bubbles. Bizarre glowing green tentacles sprout from the monster's brow and wave in the air like antennae, pointing in your direction as if to signal the presence of an intruder. The beast opens a wide mouth studded with row upon row of sharp triangular teeth, and begins sucking in air, inflating itself to double its size in a matter of seconds. You face a dreaded MUD DRAGON! You can cast a spell:

HOT	WOK	ROK
183	**167**	**198**

Or fight!

MUD DRAGON SKILL 9 STAMINA 6

If you wish to flee from the Mud Dragon and *Escape* along the western passage, turn to **70**. However, if you stay and fight, you are hampered by both your precarious position on the stepping stones and the hideous smell in the air, and must decrease your SKILL by 2 points for the duration of this battle. If you slay the Mud Dragon, turn to **131**.



117

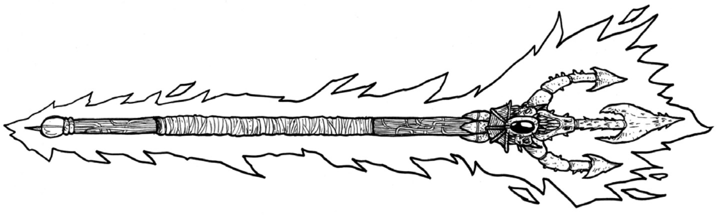
Using the Crystal Jar you catch a considerable number of bees by simply jamming it up against the hive and letting the bees fly into the jar, which you then seal with its stopper. Cross the Crystal Jar off your *Adventure Sheet* and replace it with a Jar of Bees. Now, return to **92** and follow all the instructions there, if you have not already done so.

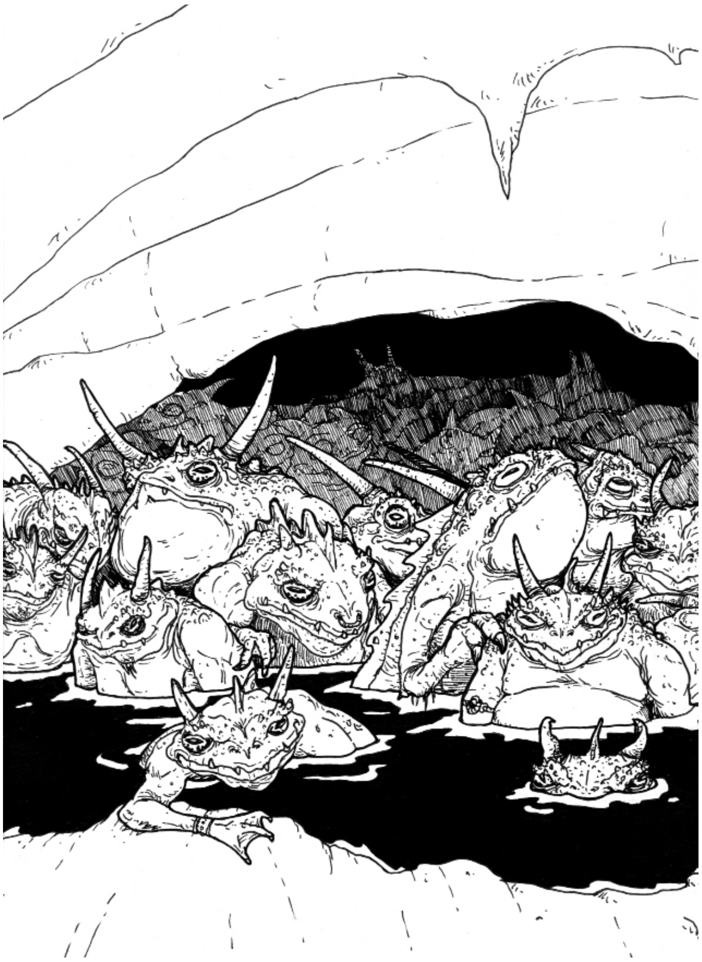
118

No sooner have you slain the priest than another even older one shuffles forth from out of the depths of the cave-temple. This robe-clad holy man has a longer beard and brandishes a staff topped with a weird star-shaped crystal that glows with purple flames. On seeing the body of his comrade, he howls 'I, Kasmanti the Arch-Librarian will make you pay dearly for this, interloper!' and attacks!

ARCH-LIBRARIAN SKILL 8 STAMINA 8

Whenever you lose an Attack Round you must deduct 3 STAMINA points instead of 2 owing to the magical nature of the old man's weapon. If you wish to flee the Under-Temple and *Escape*, turn to **100**. If you slay the Arch-Librarian of Throff, turn to **29**.





119

You fall down the sinkhole and hurtle screaming through space to land with a splash in a pool of disgustingly foul-smelling water. Roll one die and deduct the result from your STAMINA score to reflect the injuries you suffered in the fall. Judging by both the stench and the presence of several bloated Horntoad carcasses, bobbing gently about in the ripples caused by your landing, you must now be in the dreaded Croaking Caves themselves! Turn to **65**.

120

The tunnel heads north and enters a gigantic chamber from which comes an indescribable din of booming, bellowing, honking ululations. Peering carefully around the corner you see the noise is caused by countless hordes of Horntoads – big ones, small ones, fat ones, and scrawny ones – all splashing about in a fetid pool of muck. You could never fight them all! Or could you? On the opposite side of the cavern you spy another tunnel leading away again to the north. How do you propose to bypass the Horntoads and travel deeper into the Croaking Caves?

You could fight them (turn to **56**), offer them a Jar of Bees (turn to **3**), drink a Potion of Transformation (turn to **139**), or cast a magic spell:

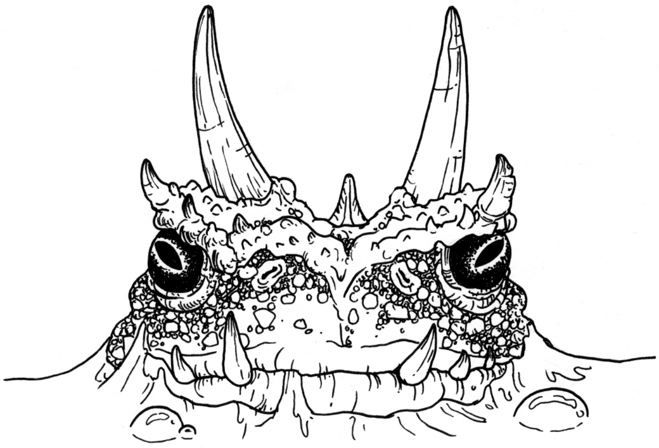
MUD	TEL	HUF
161	**182**	**144**

121

You awaken in a small cave at the end of a long tunnel. In the distance you can see a faint bluish light. Your throat is bruised and tender – deduct 1 STAMINA point for the effects of being strangled. Your equipment lies in a neat pile to one side, and your hands are tightly bound, so you cannot cast any magic spells. There is a large fire in the centre of the cave, and a thick wooden roasting spit that looks uncomfortably like it has been designed to bear your weight. You hear a sudden sound and look up to see something big and nonhuman stalking down the tunnel towards you. If you have a Knife as part of your equipment and wish to use it to cut yourself free, turn to **11**. If you do not have a Knife and wish to try and break your bonds using just your own strength, turn to **46**. If you want to wait and see what's coming, turn to **134**.

122

Even as you lay there dying on the floor of the shrine, you manage to turn and try to glimpse what fate has befallen Verrema the Black Elf. You see her run from the chamber, the trident flying along behind her, and then you here a scream, and another, and another. Your last sight is of the trident returning to the shrine, now covered in even more blood, and descending in a sharp arc in line with your unprotected throat... THUNK! Your adventure (and Verrema's) is over…



123

'Wrong, wrong, wrong!' you tell the creature. 'If you want to cook me properly, you'll need garlic and lots of it.'

'Really?' it says with interest, putting you to one side so it can hear more.

The creature is a GREMOLL – a giant carnivorous humanoid newt, and this one is feeling especially sorry for itself. It explains to you that it used to be held in high esteem by the Horntoads as a master hunter, but the arrival of the Salamander in the halls of the Frog God has put paid to that.

'Curse Xak and all his doings!' it says with feeling. Apparently Xak is the Salamander's name. This is important lore! Like most supernatural creatures, Salamanders can be banished back to their home plane by speaking aloud their true name. If in future you have the chance to speak the name Xak, add twenty to the paragraph number you have turned to, and consult this new paragraph number instead.

Meanwhile, the Gremoll is interested in learning more about your recipes for cooking human flesh. You tell it to go to the kitchen of the Horntoads and retrieve some garlic and a lot of other herbs and spices. You solemnly assure the creature you will still be here when it returns. Of course, once the Gremoll has stalked off down the tunnel and out of sight, you rapidly free yourself from your loosened bonds. Turn to **54**.

124

You enter a small humid cave overgrown with clumps of ash-coloured salt moss. The humming noise is much louder here and you can barely hear yourself think. Looking up, you notice large bees swarming around a beehive high in a crack on the western wall. There is also an exit at the back of the cave, where you see a low tunnel leading away to the north. You can climb up to investigate the beehive (turn to **35**), or leave this cave and head northwards (turn to **53**).

125

To get to the entrance of the Crystal Mines involves clambering up a steep path that winds its way through the boulders and yellow clumps of spinifex bushes that dot the cliff-side. Nearing the summit, you suddenly hear voices and freeze. Peering cautiously over the rim of the cliff-top, you see two bored Dark Goblins – small, pale-skinned, big-eyed folk with spears and shields – on guard duty outside a mine entrance close to the edge. You could fight them (turn to **52**), or cast a spell:

POP	TEL	HUF
163	**197**	**181**

126

'Definitely a hatchery,' says Verrema, prodding one of the egg sacs with the tip of her boot. 'Dunno whether we should stick around and kill all the hatchlings though – I mean, it's not like they have any treasure or anything, is it? On the other hand, lots of dead baby Salamanders now, means no big angry adult Salamanders later on, right?'

At this point the two of you find yourself surrounded by hungry Salamander hatchlings. 'Spoke too soon, didn't I?' says Verrema glumly, hefting her scimitar in anticipation of a brawl.

Verrema will fight alongside you in the upcoming combat. Turn to **108** if you need a reminder on how to conduct battles between you and Verrema versus a lot of creatures, but make a note of paragraph **141** (or here) if you do so, as **108** will not guide you back there (or here).

Now return to **141** and resolve the battle.

127

Striding across a granite floor you almost trip over a gold-scaled serpent that has squirmed out of a crack in the rock. The reptile rears up and attacks you!

GOLDEN SNAKE	SKILL 6	STAMINA 6

You cannot *Escape*. The snake has a poisonous bite. If it inflicts any wounds on you before you kill it, roll one die to find out how many STAMINA points of damage each wound will cause. If you kill the snake, you may leave the area. If you have already been here before and killed the snake then there is nothing else here. You can go:

North	Turn to **68**.
West	Turn to **33**.

128

The Giant Clam slams shut, crushing your leg painfully. Deduct 2 STAMINA points. You're also trapped! How will you extricate yourself from the deadly embrace of this huge mollusk? By using a weapon (turn to **57**)? Or a casting a spell?

YOB	POP	PEP
164	**146**	**172**

129

This was a senseless battle that could not be avoided. You ignore the Black Elf's weapon and armour, but she does have a lump of twisted metal tied to a chain around her neck. You may take the Lucky Charm if you wish – although it brought the Black Elf no good fortune – and add it to your *Adventure Sheet*. It will allow you to deduct 1 from the dice roll every time you have to *Test your Luck*. With a heavy heart, you return to the junction. Turn to **7**.

130

Gloister is runny, cheese-like goo that tastes and smells absolutely awful. Served with bread, it restores not only 2 STAMINA points, but also returns your LUCK score to its *Initial* level! Make the necessary adjustments on your *Adventure Sheet*. Return to **73** and take another choice.

131

Having defeated the Mud Dragon, you skip over the rest of the stepping stones and arrive at the far wall of the chamber. The chest you saw earlier is a large and solid affair, crafted from teak and bound with rusty strips of iron. A brass plate on the front bears the legend: "Property of Kullion the Crab". It appears unlocked and the lid is slightly ajar. However, there seems to be some sort of trigger mechanism connected to the rear hinges. If you want to leave the chest alone, go back over the stepping stones and head west, turn to **70**. If you want to try and disarm the trap and open the chest, roll two dice and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **97**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **42**.

132

'Zounds!' he cries. 'Merkurio never makes a mistake! You may think you are a mighty warrior, but you will be even better after a lesson from Merkurio!' If you pay for a lesson, turn to **113**. If you decide you've had enough of the pompous fool and want to fight him in earnest, turn to **95**.

133

You open your money pouch and begin counting out Gold Pieces. The priest's eyes light up.

'Let it not be said that Throff's servants turn away those willing to make the proper donations,' he intones. 'My name is Zhiamle the Under-Priest, and I believe we may be able to come to an agreement.'

Roll one die. This is the number of Gold Pieces that Zhiamle will accept to allow you to enter the temple. However, if you previously cast the HUF or PEP spells you must roll two dice to pay for the damage you have caused.

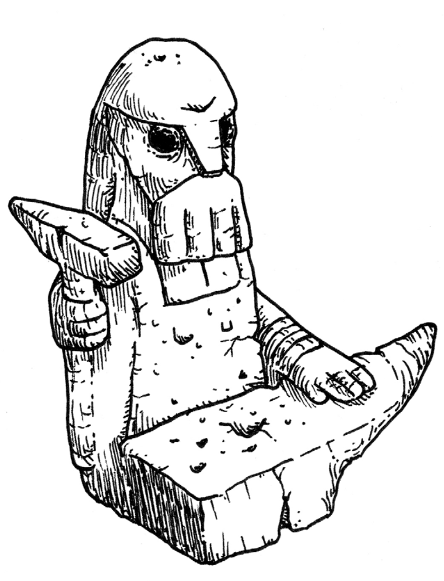
If you cannot afford to, or do not wish to pay the bribe, you can either fight the priest (turn to **67**), or leave this area and try somewhere else (turn to **100**).

If you can afford to and wish to pay the bribe, cross the amount of Gold Pieces off your *Adventure Sheet*. 'Welcome to the Under-Temple of Throff!' says Zhiamle. You can visit the Library of Throff (turn to **85**), or the Holy Pool (turn to **12**).

134

A giant lizard-like creature with rubbery skin and a great crest enters the cave, grabs the spit from the fire, and begins to tie you to it. All the while it talks partly to itself and partly to you about how you will die. 'First, I'm going to roast the human slowly, till all its outside is black and crispy, but it's still alive. Then I'm going to chop its legs off and eat them, and then I'll suck its eyes out with my tongue. Then...'

For a brief moment, your bonds come free. Will you grab your weapon and attack the creature (turn to **32**), or will you allow yourself to be tied to the spit and engage the creature in conversation (turn to **123**)?



135

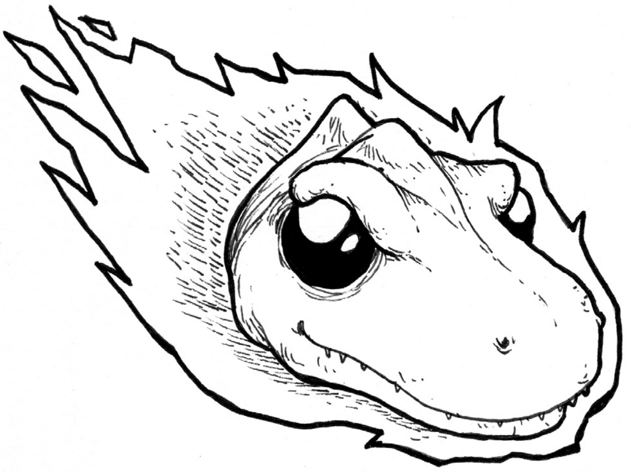
The creature's acidic saliva hits you on the chest, where it begins to sizzle and dissolve its way through your robes and armour and into your flesh! Deduct 2 STAMINA points. Meanwhile, the beetle heaves its black chitin-clad bulk out from its burrow and scuttles down the tunnel to attack you with its serrated and claw-like mandibles! Defend yourself!

BADDU-BEETLE SKILL 7 STAMINA 9

If you wish to flee from the Baddu-Beetle and *Escape* by running northwards up the tunnel, turn to **45**. Fight the battle as normal, except that every time you wound the beetle, it will respond by angrily spitting virulent acid at you. Roll one die and consult the following table to see whether this acid spit hits you:

Roll	Effect
1	Hits you in the face. Lose 3 STAMINA points and 1 LUCK point.
2	Hits your weapon arm. Lose 2 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point.
3	Hits your other arm. Lose 2 STAMINA points.
4	Hits your leg. Lose 1 STAMINA point.
5-6	Misses.

If you slay the Baddu-Beetle, turn to **80**.



136

Even though you are sinking slowly but surely into the depths, you calmly fashion your Rope into a lasso of sorts, and attempt to snare the door-handle on the northern wall, so that you can clamber up the rope to safety. Roll two die and *Test your Skill*. Add two to the result if you are wearing or carrying a Chainmail Hauberk. If you are successful, you manage this feat; reach the door, open it and step through (turn to **26**). If you are unsuccessful, turn to **88**.

137*

You have defeated the Salamander of the Croaking Caves! You rush over to the altar and pick up the sacred idol. You have retrieved the Idol of Verlang! Your quest is over.

Suddenly and completely unexpectedly, there is an agonizing pain in your back, as if you have been stabbed with a giant flaming spear! And again! And again! Blood is already pouring from your gaping wounds, as you turn around to confront your assailant. It is none other than the Salamander's trident, now hovering in the air of its own accord, like some horrific metal hornet. Again it strikes, wounding you grievously in the stomach this time, and you collapse to the now blood-stained temple floor, cradling the idol protectively to your chest. There is no mercy from the flying trident however, for it stabs downwards repeatedly until your brutalized corpse is as still as the idol you were carrying...

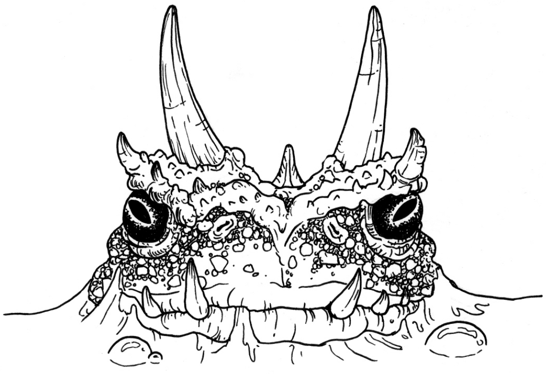
You were so close to attaining your goal, but unfortunately not close enough. Your adventure is over...

138

The strange swordsman introduces himself as Merkurio the Swordfish, an emissary from the legendary sunken city of Atlantis, and currently bored senseless waiting for an audience at the shrine of the Salamander. 'I am the second-greatest blade-master of all the oceans,' he says grandiloquently. You must have been sent here for lessons. My tuition fee for landlubbers like yourself is 2 Gold Pieces.' If you do not have 2 Gold Pieces, turn to **50**. If you have 2 Gold Pieces, whether or not you want to pay it, turn to **84**.

139

You drink the Potion of Transformation (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and turn yourself into a Horntoad. With your heart beating loudly in your chest, you step out into the central living chamber of the Horntoads, but none of them so much as bat an eyelid at your appearance. Carefully you wade across the shallower parts of the pool, taking care to avoid bumping into any of the croaking brutes, while heading for the exit. Add 1 LUCK point for your success here! You leave the cave via the tunnel in the far northern wall, just as the effects of the potion begin to wear off. Turn to **142**.

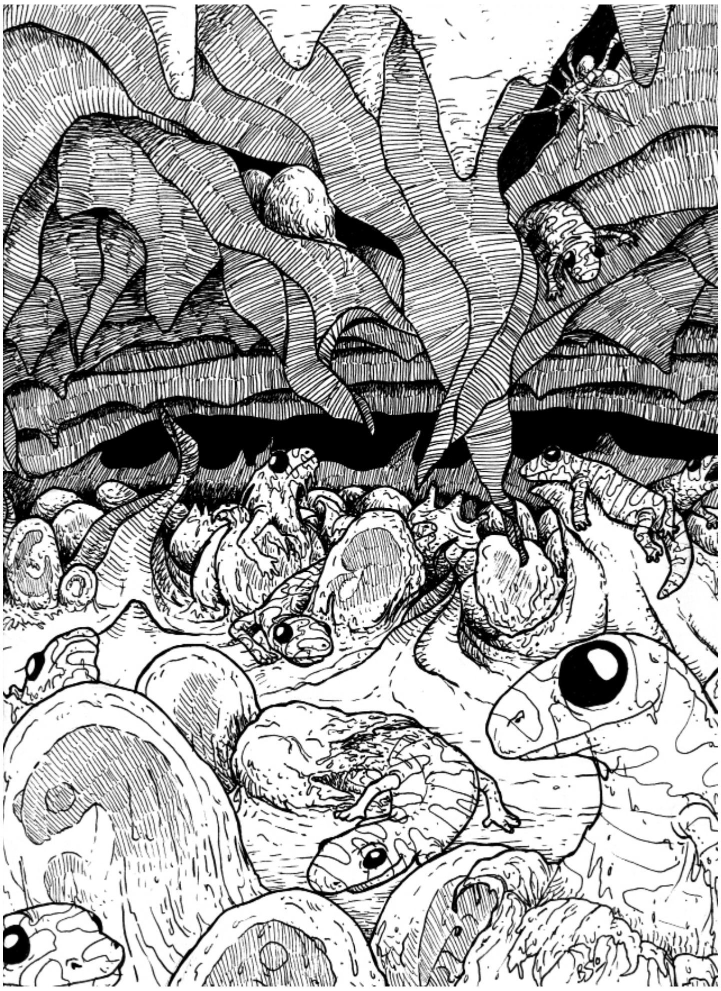


140

Because of its insubstantial, shifting form, blows from your weapon pass straight through the Sand Golem and will cause it only 1 STAMINA point of damage per hit. However, hits from the magical creature are like punches from an iron gauntlet covered in sandpaper and will still inflict 2 STAMINA points of damage on you!

SAND GOLEM SKILL 8 STAMINA 9

You cannot *Escape*. If you reduce the Sand Golem's STAMINA to zero or below, you break the spell that animates it and it becomes a harmless heap of sand once more. You look again at the cavern around you. Turn to **112**.



141*

Having defeated the guardian, you enter the cavern. It appears to be some sort of hatchery or nursery. Bizarre pulsating egg sacs, each about as big as your forearm, are clustered together in bunches on the ground. They radiate a soft amber glow, and you can see strange dark shapes writhing sinuously within them. A few of the eggs have hatched, and you are suddenly aware of a number of beady black eyes peering in your direction. Small orange lizard-like creatures with glossy skin slither out from among the eggs heading straight for you! The baby Salamanders are hungry, and they think you are their next meal! Fight them one at a time:

	SKILL	STAMINA
First SALAMANDER EFT	3	3
Second SALAMANDER EFT	2	3
Third SALAMANDER EFT	3	2
Fourth SALAMANDER EFT	3	4
Fifth SALAMANDER EFT	3	3
Sixth SALAMANDER EFT	4	3

If you wish to flee from this area and *Escape* back to the junction, turn to **7**. If you slay all the baby Salamander efts, turn to **25**.

142

The corridor you are following meets up with an intersection of many other passageways. Horntoads are generally illiterate, so there are no words to indicate where the passages lead, just crude symbols gouged into the rock. Where will you go next? Bear in mind you cannot return to any place you have already visited, no matter how briefly.

The flame-like symbol	Turn to **51**.
The circle within a circle symbol	Turn to **5**.
The half-full semi-circle symbol	Turn to **106**.
The wavy lines symbol	Turn to **34**.

143

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Potion of Fire Water with you? If not, return to **87** and choose again. If you have a Potion of Fire Water, you may drink this (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and cast your spell. Immediately you feel a surge of strength fill your body, with power swelling your muscles. You step forward to deal with these puny Horntoad guards! Although somewhat slow and clumsy, Horntoads are also big, strong, and powerful. In addition, not only are these two skilled with the use of their halberds, but they also have plenty of natural weaponry in the form of clawed fists, curving horns, and a gaping mouth full of sharp tusks. This will be a difficult battle! However, because of the magic spell you cast, you may add 3 to your Attack Strength for the duration of this combat.

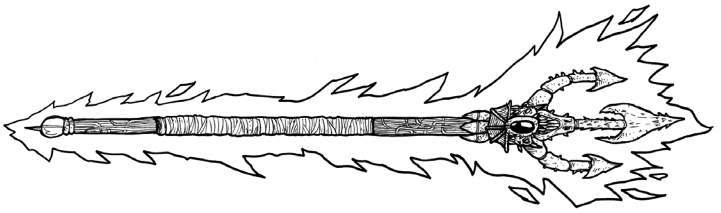
	SKILL	STAMINA
First HORNTOAD GUARD	9	8
Second HORNTOAD GUARD	8	9

You cannot *Escape*. They will both attack you at the same time. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you. If you kill both the Horntoad guards, turn to **102**.

144

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Galehorn with you? If not, return to **120** and choose again. If you have a Galehorn, you step out into the cavern and cast your spell, blowing a discordant note on the instrument. Immediately, a tremendous wind rushes out from the end of the Galehorn and blasts some of the Horntoads backwards into the wall, where they crack their heads and bodies on the sharp rocks and slump lifeless to the ground. The masses of remaining Horntoads merely stare at you open-mouthed. More of them surge forward from the dark recesses of the cavern to replace those

affected by your magic spell. You have made a grave error of judgment. Turn to **56**.



145

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Gold Piece with you? If not, return to **51** and choose again. If you have a Gold Piece, you place it on your wrist and cast your spell. The coin sticks and you can feel an invisible shield bound to your wrist. You may now fight the weird creature with extra defence.

As you cast your spell, the thing bellows loudly and rushes at you. You must defend yourself against this FLAYER, who attacks by whipping its head violently from side to side. As it does so, its long tentacles spin at you. If they catch you they will sting you with nasty barbs that inflict 3 STAMINA points of damage per hit instead of the usual 2. However, because of your magic shield, you may deduct 2 from the result when rolling the dice to determine the Flayer's Attack Strength. Resolve your battle:

FLAYER	SKILL 6	STAMINA 7

If you wish to flee from the Flayer and *Escape* back the way you came, turn to **142**. If you slay the Flayer, turn to **73**. After the fight, cross the Gold Piece off your *Adventure Sheet* as it becomes a lump of useless metal.

146

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a pebble with you? If not, return to **128** and choose again. If you have a pebble, you cast the spell upon it and drop the pebble into the water where it sinks down between the jaws of the Clam's shell. There is a sudden muffled bang – deduct 1 more STAMINA point as your leg takes part of the blast – and the surface of the pool again erupts with bubbles. The Clam however has been blown apart by the force of the explosion, and your leg is now free. Turn to **83**. Don't forget to cross the pebble off your *Adventure Sheet*.

147

Deduct 4 STAMINA points. Your spell creates a blazing fireball in your hand, which you throw at the fish-creature. It hits him right in the torso, hurling him backwards in a blast of flame. Despite suffering horrific burns however, the creature utters not one cry of pain. Turn to **77**.

148

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any sand with you? If not, return to **66** and choose again. If you have some sand, you cast your spell and sprinkle the grains of sand on the floor in front of you (remember to cross the sand off your *Adventure Sheet*). As the spell takes effect, the ground begins to bubble and heave, turning into a viscous pool of quicksand. Sure enough, the Tarator runs straight into the pool, and is immediately stuck fast, its great weight dragging it downwards to its doom. The beast howls in frustration, thrashing about with its long clawed arms, but this only hastens the inevitable. Gargling hatred at you until the very end, the Tarator is sucked under the quicksand and eventually vanishes from sight.

You have defeated the Tarator! Add 1 LUCK point for your victory. Searching the creature's lair – a shallow cave adjoining the main cavern – yields little other than 3 Gold Pieces and a Giant Tooth, which you can add to your *Adventure Sheet* if you wish. Two tunnels leave this cavern and head deeper underground. You cannot enter the northern tunnel however as your pool of quicksand blocks the way, so you go west instead (turn to **78**).

149

The Tunnels of Ooze are a series of caves on the northern fringes of Daddu-Yadu that lie right at the base of the cliffs. The whole area is quite damp and probably submerged at high tide. Marine life is everywhere: large crabs waving their pincers menacingly, beds of mussels and other shellfish, and blue starfish clinging to the rocks. The calls of seabirds fill the air. You have a choice of three ways onwards. A small cave from which comes a strange humming noise (turn to **124**), a much larger cavern entrance marked by broken bones and skulls (turn to **66**), or a narrow tunnel that is half-underwater and will require you to wade in (turn to **31**).

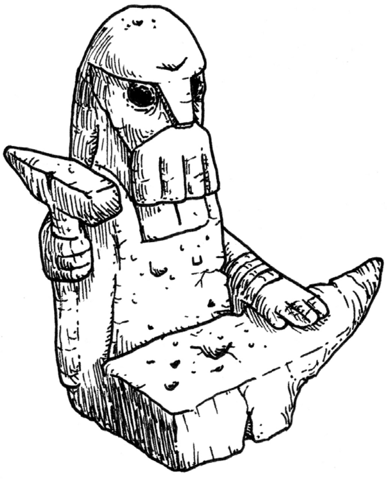
150

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a pebble with you? If not, return to **96** and choose again. If you have a pebble, you cast the spell upon it. Telling the Black Elf to stand back, you throw the pebble at the iron bars of the cell. There is a loud bang, and the door of the cell is blown off its hinges and on to the floor. Don't forget to cross the pebble off your *Adventure Sheet*.

The Black Elf steps free from her cell, and thanks you for freeing her. Suddenly, her eyes narrow in alarm, and she points her scimitar at you.

'How do I know I can trust you?' she says.

You attempt to convince the warrior maiden as to the worthiness of your quest. Roll two die and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **108**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **115**.



151
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Giant Tooth with you? If not, return to **188** and choose again. If you have a Giant Tooth (remember to cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*), you can throw it on the ground and cast your spell on it to create a hulking Giant with a mane of dark hair. You order the Giant to attack the Salamander. The Giant has the following scores:

MAGICAL GIANT	SKILL 8	STAMINA 9

If your Giant wins, it will disappear in a cloud of blue smoke. If your Giant loses, you will have to finish off the fight yourself. Now, turn to **114** and conduct the battle between the Salamander and your Giant.

152
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Potion of Fire Water with you? If not, return to **43** and choose again. If you have a Potion of Fire Water, you may drink this (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and cast your spell. Immediately you feel a surge of strength fill your body, with power swelling your muscles. You step forward and tear one of the doors from its hinges, startling a bald, bearded priest in long robes and holding a crystal-topped staff, who was standing right behind the door.

'What is the meaning of this outrage?' he shrieks at you.

Will you try and bribe your way out of trouble (turn to **133**), or will you attack the priest (turn to **67**)? Or, you could leave this area entirely, and try somewhere else in Daddu-Yadu (turn to **100**).

153
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Galehorn with you? If not, return to **70** and choose again. If you have a Galehorn, you cast your spell and blow a note on the instrument. Immediately, a tremendous wind rushes out from the end of the Galehorn, blowing quicksand away from your legs in thick porridge-like clumps. Pointing the artefact behind you, you use it to blow yourself through the quicksand, skimming across the surface until you bump into the far wall! Quickly, you get to your feet, open the door and step inside the next chamber – turn to **26**.

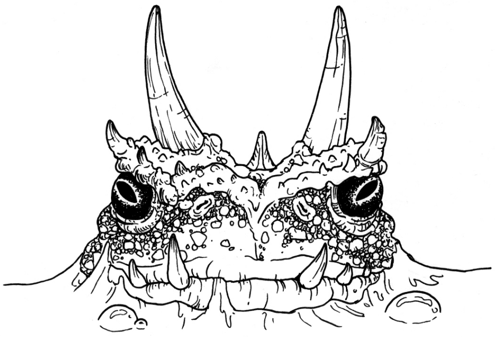
154
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Gold Piece with you? If not, return to **61** and choose again. If you have a Gold Piece, you place it on your wrist and cast your spell. The coin sticks and you can feel an invisible shield bound to your wrist. You may now fight the Orc with extra defence.

The GREAT ORC advances, cracking his whip. This is his idea of sport! With his other hand, he grabs a scimitar off the wall. Resolve your battle with Captain Morgul, Overseer of the Crystal Mines! However, because of your shield, you may deduct 2 from the result when rolling the dice to determine the Orc's Attack Strength.

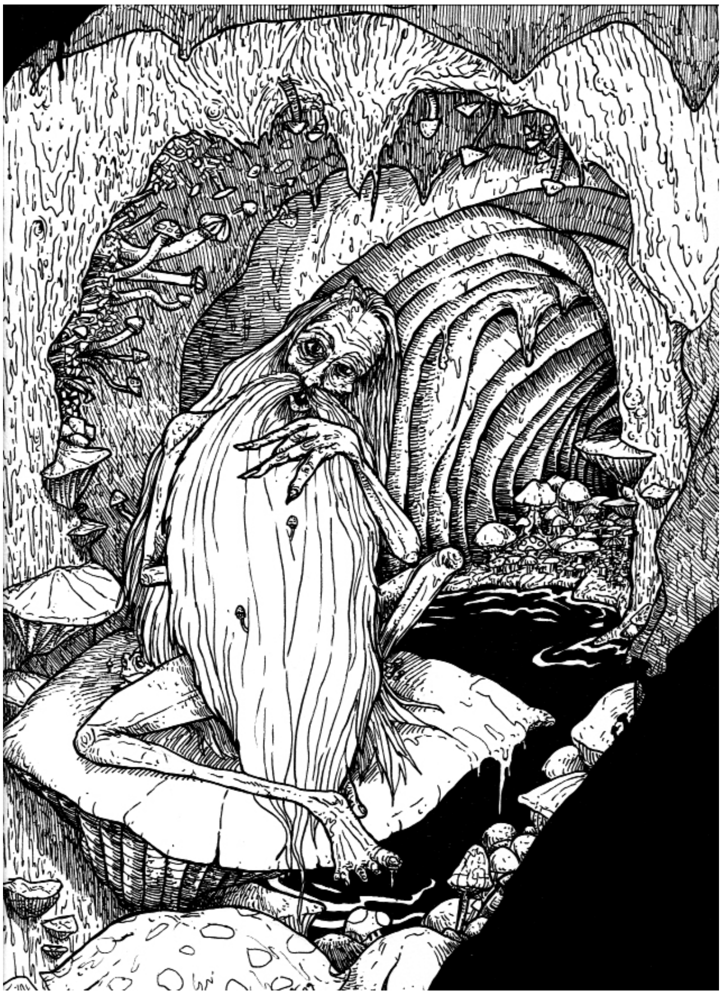
GREAT ORC	SKILL 7	STAMINA 8

He will constantly try to catch you with his whip during the fight. Roll one die for him before you start each Attack Round. A roll of 1 means that he has snared you with his whip and you must deduct 3 SKILL points for the next three Attack Rounds while you fight to free yourself. If you wish to flee this area and *Escape* (as long as you are not entangled in the Orc's whip), turn to **75**. If you slay Captain Morgul, turn to **48**. After the fight, cross the Gold Piece off your *Adventure Sheet* as it becomes a lump of useless metal.

155
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any stone dust with you? If not, return to **51** and choose again. If you have some stone dust, you throw it over the creature and cast your spell. Within seconds, its movements become slower and it starts to turn a pale grey in colour. Too late it realizes what is happening and before long, the creature has transformed into a rather bizarre stone statue. Cross the stone dust off your *Adventure Sheet*. Turn to **73**.



156
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Potion of Fire Water with you? If not, return to **41** and choose again. If you have a Potion of Fire Water, you may drink this (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and cast your spell. Immediately you feel a surge of strength fill your body, with power swelling your muscles. Before the guards can reach you and attack, you begin tearing the chains and manacles off the gangs of miners, freeing slaves left, right, and centre. The ragged horde takes up picks and hammers as weapons and pours forth, overwhelming the guards in a short but bloody battle. The Rhino-Man is the last to succumb, disappearing under a heaving



mass of furious miners who tear a ring of keys from his dying grasp and begin to free the rest of the slaves. Turn to **8**.

157

Deduct 4 STAMINA points. Your spell creates a large fireball in your hand, which you fling at the enchanted guardian. It hits the Sand Golem square on the chest and engulfs it in a fiery blast. When the smoke clears, you see the intense heat of the explosion produced by your spell has caused the sand the Golem was composed of to completely vitrify. Standing in front of you now is a motionless glass statue! You give the Golem a push and it falls over and shatters on some rocks. You have defeated the creature – turn to **112**.

158

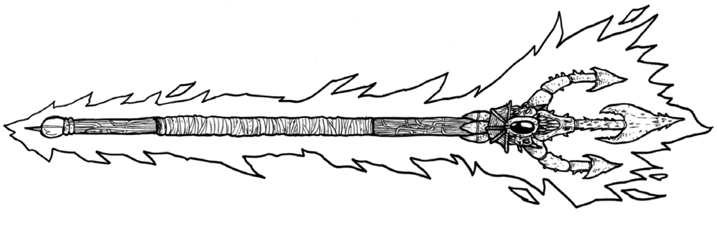
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Potion of Fire Water with you? If not, return to **16** and choose again. If you have a Potion of Fire Water, you may drink this (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and cast your spell. Immediately you feel a surge of strength fill your body, with power swelling your muscles. You step forward and tear the portcullis from the walls, then throw it in a tangled heap of twisted iron upon the floor. With the alarm bell still ringing in your ears, you quickly flee the Crystal Mines before any more Dark Goblin guard squadrons show up! Turn to **100**.

159

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Giant Tooth with you? If not, return to **104** and choose again. If you have a Giant Tooth (remember to cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*), you can throw it on the ground and cast your spell on it to create a muscular Giant with sledgehammer fists who will fight the Crystal Warrior for you. Resolve the battle:

	SKILL	STAMINA
CRYSTAL WARRIOR	11	13
MAGICAL GIANT	8	9

If your Giant wins, it will disappear in a cloud of blue smoke. If your Giant loses, you will have to finish off the fight yourself. If you wish to flee the Under-Temple at any stage and *Escape*, turn to **100**. Your war-hammer is the perfect weapon to fight the Crystal Warrior. If you no longer have it, you die here in the sanctum, under a rain of blows from the idol's crystalline fists. If you (armed with your war-hammer) and/or the Giant destroy the Crystal Warrior, turn to **21**.



160

There is no such spell as this! Return to **188** and choose again.

161

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any sand with you? If not, return to **120** and choose again. If you have some sand, you step out into the cavern; casting your spell and sprinkling the grains of sand over the Horntoads' communal water pool (remember to cross the sand off your *Adventure Sheet*). As the spell takes effect, the pool begins to bubble and heave, turning into a viscous mire of quicksand. The masses of Horntoads merely stare at you open-mouthed. Mud, muck and quicksand are their natural habitat and they are completely unhindered by it. You have made a grave error of judgment. Turn to **56**.

162

'Zared!' you call out in the midst of the fungi cavern. 'Zared the Hermit!'

'Yes, yes! Settle down!' calls a grumpy voice that belongs to a peculiar figure who emerges from where he had been hiding behind a clump of giant mushrooms.

Zared the Hermit is a ridiculously scrawny old man who is completely naked, though his modesty is preserved by an incredibly long and luxuriant white beard that grows down to his knees. He has been in these tunnels so long that his dirt-stained skin appears to made from the earth itself, and you spot tiny mushrooms growing in his beard.

'Thank you for rescuing me from my captor,' says Zared, on seeing that you have disposed of the Sand Golem. 'That will teach me to meddle with Animation Spells in future! Got any food? I'm starving!'

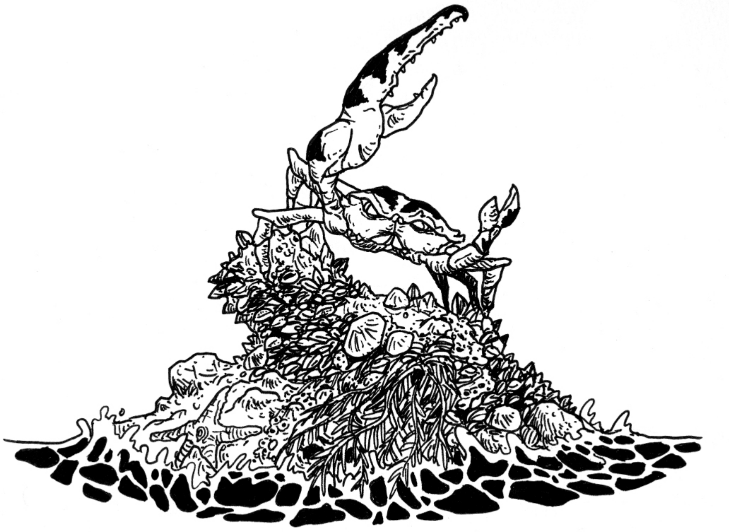
Zared will trade food for knowledge (turn to **81**), or items (turn to **18**). If you have no Provisions left, or do not wish to trade, turn to **69**.

163

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any pebbles with you? If not, return to **125** and choose again. If you have any pebbles, choose how many you will use and cast your spell. You may throw these pebbles at the Dark Goblins, but for each one you must roll a number equal or less than your SKILL score on two dice in order to make a successful hit. Each successful hit will inflict 2 STAMINA points of damage on one of the Dark Goblins – you choose which one (and you can *Test your Luck* to inflict more serious wounds if you wish). If you miss with two consecutive throws, the Dark Goblins will step in and attack and you may throw no more pebbles. In this case, and also if you run out of pebbles, you must fight!

	SKILL	STAMINA
First DARK GOBLIN	5	5
Second DARK GOBLIN	5	5

If both of them are still alive, they will attack you at the same time. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you. If you wish to flee the Crystal Mines and *Escape*, turn to **100**. If you defeat both the Dark Goblins, a quick search of their corpses reveals 3 Gold Pieces which you may take if you wish. Turn to **75**. Don't forget to cross off all the pebbles you used from your *Adventure Sheet*!



164

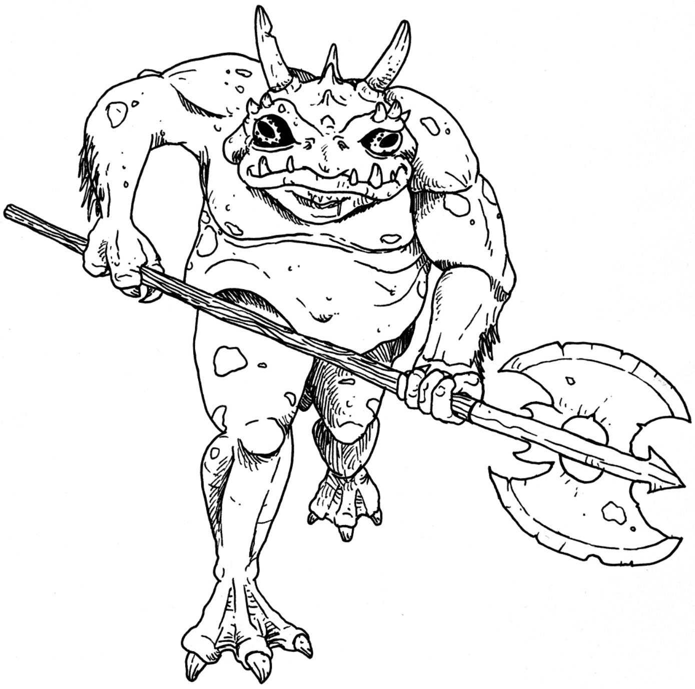
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Giant Tooth with you? If not, return to **128** and choose again. If you have a Giant Tooth (remember to cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*), you can throw it on the ground and cast your spell on it to create a broad-shouldered Giant with long sinewy arms that appears next to you in the pool with a splash. You order the Giant to free you from the Clam. It reaches beneath the water and grips the Clam with both hands. After a minute or two of straining muscles, it wrenches the overgrown mollusk apart with a great cracking noise, freeing your trapped leg. Its task completed, the Giant disappears in a cloud of blue smoke. Turn to **83**.

165

Deduct 4 STAMINA points. Your spell creates a large fireball in your hand, which you fling at the living statue. It hits the Crystal Warrior right on the chest and engulfs it in a fiery blast. However, when the smoke clears, you see your spell has merely damaged the idol, not destroyed it. Its once gleaming surface now blackened and cracked, the Crystal Warrior advances inexorably towards you. Defend yourself!

	SKILL	STAMINA
CRYSTAL WARRIOR	9	9

If you wish to flee the Under-Temple and *Escape*, turn to **100**. Your war-hammer is the perfect weapon to fight the Crystal Warrior. If you no longer have it, you die here in the sanctum, under a rain of blows from the idol's crystalline fists. If you destroy the Crystal Warrior with your war-hammer, turn to **21**.



166

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Cloth Skullcap with you? If not, return to **40** and choose again. If you have a Cloth Skullcap, you cast your spell, close your eyes and concentrate, trying to detect the thoughts of the strange fish-creature. Its alien mind is difficult to read, but while it may be arrogant and impetuous, it is certainly not evil. If you want to talk to the creature, turn to **138**. If you want to fight it, turn to **95**.

167

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Gold Piece with you? If not, return to **116** and choose again. If you have a Gold Piece, you place it on your wrist and cast your spell. The coin sticks and you can feel an invisible shield bound to your wrist. You may now fight the Mud Dragon with extra defence.

The Mud Dragon slithers across the surface of the pool towards you, attempting to engulf you in its frighteningly wide toothy maw. However, because of your shield, you may deduct 2 from the result when rolling the dice to determine the Mud Dragon's Attack Strength.

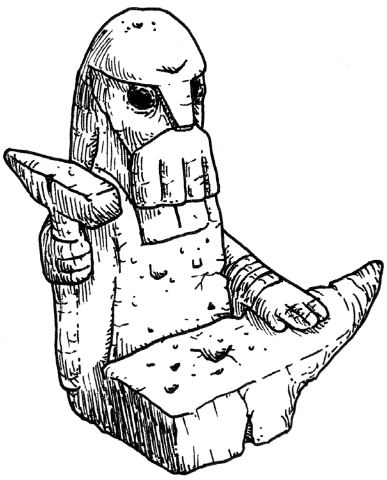
MUD DRAGON SKILL 9 STAMINA 6

If you wish to flee from the Mud Dragon and *Escape* along the western passage, turn to **70**. However, if you stay and fight, you are hampered by both your precarious position on the stepping stones and the hideous smell in the air, and must decrease your SKILL by 2 points for the duration of this battle. If you slay the Mud Dragon, turn to **131**. After the fight, cross the Gold Piece off your *Adventure Sheet* as it becomes a lump of useless metal.

168

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any stone dust with you? If not, return to **61** and choose again. If you have some stone dust, you throw it over the Orc and cast your spell. Within seconds, Morgul's movements become slower and he starts to turn a pale grey in colour. Too late he realizes what is happening and before long, the Orc Overseer of the Crystal Mines has been transformed into a stone statue, his face frozen forever in a mask of abject terror. Cross the stone dust off your *Adventure Sheet*.

A quick search of the room yields 3 Gold Pieces, 2 meals worth of Provisions, five jagged lumps of coal, and a stoppered Crystal Jar. Note whatever you wish to take on your *Adventure Sheet*. You leave the chamber. Turn to **75**.



169

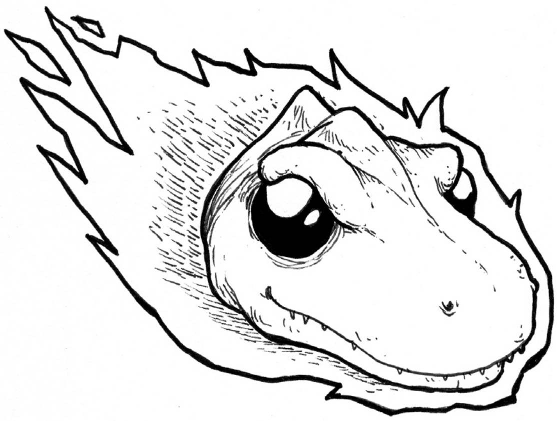
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Cloth Skullcap with you? If not, return to **87** and choose again. If you have a Cloth Skullcap, you cast your spell, close your eyes and concentrate, trying to detect the thoughts of the two Horntoad guards. Their minds are like wide empty pools of swampwater and difficult to read properly. Their prime concern is currently dealing with you, but you also detect an undercurrent of longing for a delicious meal of tasty bees, preferably still alive and buzzing. If you have a Jar of Bees and wish to give it to the Horntoads, turn to **15**. Otherwise, your only other option now will be to fight them (turn to **30**).

170

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Gold Piece with you? If not, return to **16** and choose again. If you have a Gold Piece, you place it on your wrist and cast your spell. The coin sticks and you can feel an invisible shield bound to your wrist. You may now fight your next battle with extra defence. Because of this shield, you may deduct 2 from the result when rolling the dice to determine your next opponent's Attack Strength. Note that this only applies to the next battle you fight while in the Crystal Mines. Once you have fought one battle or left the Crystal Mines, the spell will wear off. After the fight, or if the spell wears off, cross the Gold Piece from your *Adventure Sheet* as it becomes a lump of useless metal. For now, you flee north, deeper into the mines. Turn to **33**.

171

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any sand with you? If not, return to **70** and choose again. If you have some sand, you cast your spell and sprinkle the grains of sand on the surface of the quicksand (remember to cross the sand off your *Adventure Sheet*). As the spell takes effect, the floor begins to bubble and heave, turning into another viscous pool of quicksand. This new, improved variety reacts with the stuff you are standing in, and soon enough you are sinking even more quickly, vanishing from sight with amazing rapidity. You perish here in the Tunnels of Ooze, sucked beneath the quicksand to suffer a horrible fate. Your adventure is over...



172

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Potion of Fire Water with you? If not, return to **128** and choose again. If you have a Potion of Fire Water, you may drink this (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and cast your spell. Immediately you feel a surge of strength fill your body, with power swelling your muscles up in size. You bend over, put your arms in the water, and wrench the Clam apart with your bare hands, freeing your trapped leg. Turn to **83**.

173

'Oh, flippin' heck, not you again!' says Verrema upon seeing the Salamander. 'Of all the rotten luck...'

The Salamander laughs. 'So priest, you have joined forces with the renegade Black Elf? I was going to devour her later, but you bringing her here now has saved me the trouble! Much obliged!'

'Shut it, lizard!' shouts the Black Elf maiden. 'The only thing you'll be devouring here is your own tail, when we force-feed it down your throat after cutting you into pieces!'

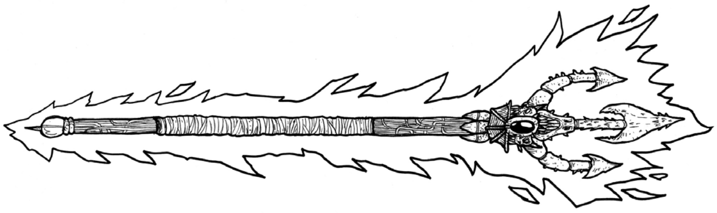
It seems these two have history! Return to **188** and choose as to whether you will fight the Salamander or cast a magic spell.

174

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any pebbles with you? If not, return to **41** and choose again. If you have any pebbles, choose how many you will use and cast your spell. You may throw these pebbles at the guards, but for each one you must roll a number equal or less than your SKILL score on two dice in order to make a successful hit. Each successful hit will inflict 2 STAMINA points of damage on one of the guards – you choose which one (and you can *Test your Luck* to inflict more serious wounds if you wish). If you miss with two consecutive throws, the guards will step in and attack and you may throw no more pebbles. In this case, and also if you run out of pebbles, you must fight!

	SKILL	STAMINA
RHINO-MAN	8	9
First DARK GOBLIN	6	5
Second DARK GOBLIN	5	5
Third DARK GOBLIN	5	4

You cannot *Escape*. Fight them two at a time. Each pair will attack you simultaneously. Roll for your own Attack Strength and roll once for each of the two creatures. If your Attack Strength is higher than either of theirs, you may choose which creature you inflict the wound on. If one of their Attack Strengths is higher and the other lower, you will wound the lower one, but be hit by the higher one. If both their Attack Strengths are higher, they will both wound you. If you kill them all, you take a ring of keys from the belt of the dead Rhino-Man and begin to free all of the mining slaves. Turn to **8**. Don't forget to cross off all the pebbles you used from your *Adventure Sheet*!



175

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Giant Tooth with you? If not, return to **66** and choose again. If you have a Giant Tooth (remember to cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*), you can throw it on the ground and cast your spell on it to create a muscular Giant with sledgehammer fists who will fight the Tarator for you. Standing two and half metres tall, with great rending talons and thick blubbery skin, the Tarator will be a very difficult opponent to defeat. Resolve the battle:

	SKILL	STAMINA
TARATOR	8	13
MAGICAL GIANT	8	9

If your Giant wins, it will disappear in a cloud of blue smoke. If your Giant loses, you will have to finish off the fight yourself. The Tarator's powerful clawed fists cause 3 STAMINA points of damage every time it wins an Attack Round. If it loses an Attack Round, it only suffers 1 STAMINA point of damage due to its leathery hide (unless you are using the Crystal Staff, in which case you inflict 3 STAMINA points of damage as per usual). If you wish to flee from the Tarator and *Escape* via a side passage in the western wall, turn to **78**. If your Giant or yourself defeat the Tarator, turn to **91**.

176

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Cloth Skullcap with you? If not, return to **43** and choose again. If you have a Cloth Skullcap, you cast your spell, close your eyes and concentrate, trying to detect the thoughts of any intelligent creatures nearby. Immediately, you sense the mind of an old human priest lurking directly behind the doors. The priest is thinking about gold, or more specifically, how much you should pay him to enter the Under-Temple of Throff. If you are given the option in the future to bribe the priest, you may deduct 2 from the die roll, down to a minimum score of 1, to reflect the insight gained here. For now, you step up to knock on one of the doors. Turn to **79**.

177

Deduct 4 STAMINA points. Your spell creates a blazing fireball in your hand, which you toss at the tentacle-headed creature. It hits the thing square on the head, hurling it backwards into its own cooking pot in a blast of flame that kills it instantly. The creature's burnt and blackened carcass sinks slowly into the pot, until only its legs and feet protrude outwards at an unusual angle. Turn to **73**.

178

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any pebbles with you? If not, return to **104** and choose again. If you have any pebbles, choose how many you will use and cast your spell. You may throw these pebbles at the Crystal Warrior, but for each one you must roll a number equal or less than your SKILL score on two dice in order to make a successful hit. Each successful hit will inflict 2 STAMINA points of damage on the Crystal Warrior (and you can *Test your Luck* to inflict more serious wounds if you wish). If you miss with two consecutive throws, the Crystal Warrior will step in and attack and you may throw no more pebbles. In this case, and also if you run out of pebbles, you must fight the Crystal Warrior.

CRYSTAL WARRIOR	SKILL 11	STAMINA 13

If you wish to flee the Under-Temple and *Escape*, turn to **100**. Your war-hammer is the perfect weapon to fight the Crystal Warrior. If you no longer have it, you die here in the sanctum, under a rain of blows from the idol's crystalline fists. If you destroy the Crystal Warrior with your war-hammer and/or your exploding pebbles, turn to **21**. Don't forget to cross off all the pebbles you used from your *Adventure Sheet*!

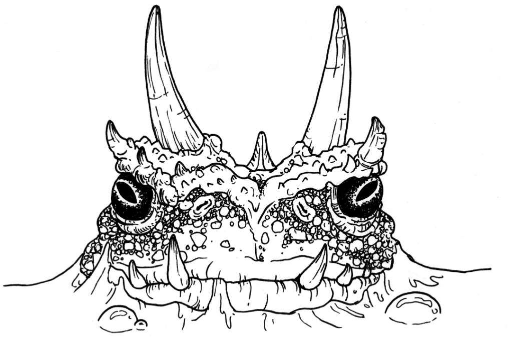
179

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any sand with you? If not, return to **26** and choose again. If you have some sand, you cast your spell and sprinkle the grains of sand on the beach in front of the Sand Golem (remember to cross the sand off your *Adventure Sheet*). As the spell takes effect, the floor begins to bubble and heave, turning into a viscous pool of quicksand. When the Sand Golem walks through the quicksand, it doesn't sink, but a strange thing happens. It absorbs the damp sand into itself and become slower and heavier. The altered fiend staggers towards you...

As the quicksand has affected the Sand Golem's composition, it is now easier to hit, and all weapons will cause normal damage against it. However, hits from the magical creature are still like punches from an iron gauntlet covered in sandpaper and will inflict 2 STAMINA points of damage on you as per normal!

SAND GOLEM SKILL 6 STAMINA 9

You cannot *Escape*. If you reduce the Sand Golem's STAMINA to zero or below, you break the spell that animates it and it becomes a harmless heap of sand once more. You look again at the cavern around you. Turn to **112**.



180

'Xak!' you howl at the Salamander. 'Xak! I speak your true name and banish back to the Plane of Fire forthwith! Begone fiend, and trouble these lands no more!'

The Salamander utters a low drawn-out scream of horror, but it is too late! A jagged tear in the fabric of space and time rips open behind the beast and engulfs it in a black void. Still screaming, Xak the Salamander is dragged back to the flaming plains of its homeland on the Elemental Plane of Fire. Just as suddenly, the hole in reality seals itself back up and winks out of existence, leaving behind only the Salamander's trident, which clatters harmlessly to the floor of the shrine. Add 1 LUCK point for your victory here, and turn to **137**.

181

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Galehorn with you? If not, return to **125** and choose again. If you have a Galehorn, you cast your spell and blow a note on the instrument. Immediately, a tremendous wind rushes out from the end of the Galehorn and blows both Dark Goblins off the edge of the cliff, and screaming to their deaths on the beach below! You can now safely enter the Crystal Mines – turn to **75**.

182

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Cloth Skullcap with you? If not, return to **120** and choose again. If you have a Cloth Skullcap, you cast your spell, close your eyes and concentrate, trying to detect the thoughts of the horde of Horntoads. Their minds are like wide empty pools of swamp-water and difficult to read properly. Their prime concerns are squalid amphibian affairs, but you also detect an undercurrent of longing for a delicious meal of tasty bees, preferably still alive and buzzing. If you have a Jar of Bees and wish to give it to the Horntoads, turn to **3**. Otherwise, your only other option now will be to fight them (turn to **56**).

183

Deduct 4 STAMINA points. Your spell creates a blazing fireball in your hand, which you toss at the Mud Dragon. It hits the beast square on the head, hurling it backwards into the pool in a blast of flame and killing it instantly. The creature's burnt and blackened carcass sinks slowly under the surface of the liquid mud pool. Turn to **131**.

184

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any sand with you? If not, return to **16** and choose again. If you have some sand, you cast your spell and sprinkle the grains of sand on the floor around the portcullis (remember to cross the sand off your *Adventure Sheet*). As the spell takes effect, the ground begins to bubble and heave, turning into a viscous pool of quicksand. Sure enough, the portcullis slips from its wall housings and sinks slowly into the quicksand, eventually vanishing from sight. With the alarm bell still ringing in your ears, you leap over the quicksand and rapidly flee the Crystal Mines before any more Dark Goblin guard squadrons show up! Turn to **100**.

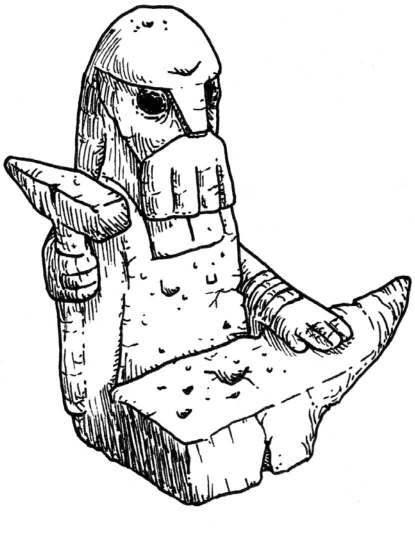
185

'Well, priest,' says Verrema the Black Elf, who has been searching the dark alcoves at the back of Furlakk's shrine. 'You can rest here and recuperate and whatnot, but I've found me a secret staircase leading upwards, so I guess I'll be lighting that signal-beacon you keeping banging on about. Unless of course, you want to join me?'

You rush to investigate whether she is telling the truth. There, behind a secret panel of carven friezes, is a rickety iron staircase leading upwards in a tight spiral to the top of the cliffs. You can even glimpse the faint smudge of daylight right at the summit of the hidden shaft. Both you and Verrema immediately begin ascending the stairs.

Some time and a ridiculous number of steps later, the two of you are standing at the top of the great jagged cliffs that form the Earth End Coastline, warming your hands against a blazing fire, and waiting for the telltale light of a ship bobbing up and down on the darkening waters. Seabirds glide and call on a strong brine-scented breeze that ruffles through the grass and snaps about your robes. The sun has set over the lands of Kakhabad, the velvet night sky above the sea is studded with a thousand gleaming stars, and this well and truly is

THE END!



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186

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Potion of Fire Water with you? If not, return to **96** and choose again. If you have a Potion of Fire Water, you may drink this (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*) and cast your spell. Immediately you feel a surge of strength fill your body, with power swelling your muscles. You step forward and tear the barred iron door from the walls and throw it in a tangled heap of twisted metal upon the floor.

The Black Elf steps free from her cell, and thanks you for freeing her. Suddenly, her eyes narrow in alarm, and she points her scimitar at you.

'How do I know I can trust you?' she says.

You attempt to convince the warrior maiden as to the worthiness of your quest. Roll two die and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **108**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **115**.

187

Deduct 4 STAMINA points. Your spell creates a blazing fireball in your hand, which you throw at the Orc. It hits him right in the torso, hurling him backwards against the wall in a blast of flame. His charred and lifeless carcass slumps to the floor, billowing plumes of smoke. You have defeated Captain Morgul, Overseer of the Crystal Mines. Turn to **48**.

188*

You follow a wide tunnel that opens up into a huge chamber that can only be the shrine of Furlakk the Frog God, Lord of Amphibians. An immense stone statue of Furlakk – in his guise as a Horntoad, obviously – stares down balefully from an altar that has been piled high with skulls. The vaulted ceiling is supported by crooked pillars inscribed with the carvings of fanged demons and horned toads. There are smoking braziers and burning candles everywhere, and the air is so thick with the sweet stench of incense your eyes start watering.

There! You spy it! At the foot of the altar lies the plain and simple, yet utterly sacred Idol of Verlang, a bearded, helmeted smith with a hammer and an anvil. You move towards it but are brought up short by the sound of an ancient voice, rich in evil, which booms out across the shrine.

'Not so fast!' The speaker is none other than the SALAMANDER of Daddu-Yadu, stalking out across the floor of the shrine. It stands three metres tall on its back legs, with a long tail trailing behind, and its skin is a mixture of black, yellow, and red, all wreathed in fire. Great dark eyes regard you inscrutably from a broad wedge-shaped head, and in its hands it holds a flaming iron trident of outlandish design.

'You have done well to make it this far, blacksmith!' says the Salamander contemptuously. 'But now you face no croaking Horntoad, no Gremoll newtling. You face me, and I cannot allow you take the idol. My people made it eons ago, at the behest of Verlang, before you humans stole it from us, and now I am taking it back to its rightful place in the City of Brass.'

'This is sacrilege,' you yell at the Salamander. 'The idol is ours, and I have come to collect it.'

'Well, smith,' says the Salamander quietly, dabbing at its eyelids with a long pink tongue. 'Come and get it then.'

Will you fight the Salamander of Daddu-Yadu (turn to **114**), or will you cast a magic spell:

XAK	WOK	YOB
160	**195**	**151**

189

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any stone dust with you? If not, return to **70** and choose again. If you have some stone dust, you throw it over the quicksand and cast your spell. But nothing happens! This spell only works on living creatures. Cross the stone dust off your *Adventure Sheet* and return to **70** and choose again.

190

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Giant Tooth with you? If not, return to **41** and choose again. If you have a Giant Tooth (remember to cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*), you can throw it on the ground and cast your spell on it to create a hulking Giant with a mane of dark hair. You order the Giant to free the slaves, which it starts to do, only to be interrupted from this task by the Dark Goblins. The freed slaves attack the Goblins however and a furious battle begins. Meanwhile, your summoned Giant has been once again disturbed from its task of unchaining slaves by the approach of the snarling Rhino-Man. Resolve this combat:

	SKILL	STAMINA
RHINO-MAN	8	9
MAGICAL GIANT	8	9

If your Giant wins, it will disappear in a cloud of blue smoke. If your Giant loses, you will have to finish off the fight yourself. You cannot *Escape*. If you and/or the Giant slay the Rhino-Man, you notice that the miners have now disposed of the three Dark Goblins. You take a ring of keys from the belt of the dead Rhino-Man and begin to free the rest of the mining slaves. Turn to **8**.

191

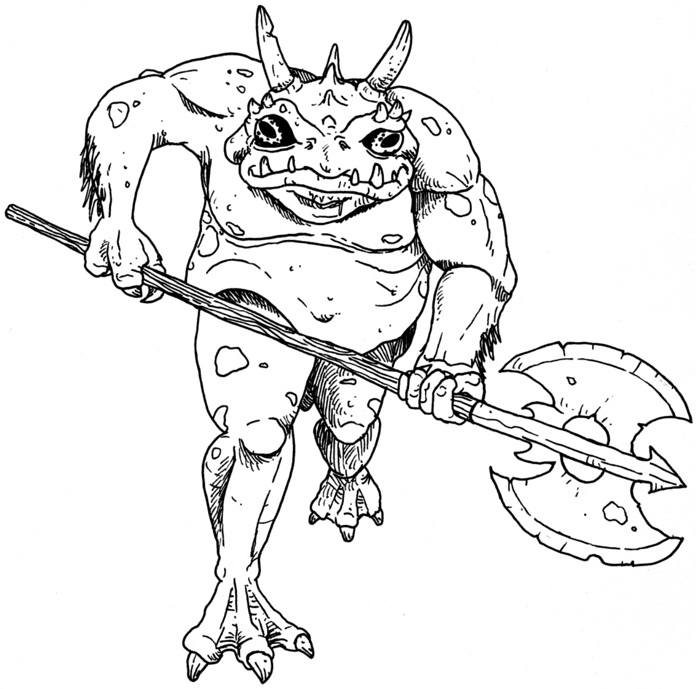
Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Galehorn with you? If not, return to **26** and choose again. If you have a Galehorn, you cast your spell and blow a note on the instrument. Immediately, a tremendous wind rushes out from the end of the Galehorn and blows the Sand Golem completely apart, scattering its constituent grains of sand to the far corners of the cavern. You have defeated the magical creature – turn to **112**.

192

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any stone dust with you? If not, return to **66** and choose again. If you have some stone dust, you throw it over the charging Tarator and cast your spell. Within seconds, the beast's movements become slower and it starts to turn a pale grey in colour. Too late it realizes what is happening and before long, the hideous Tarator of the Tunnels of Ooze has been transformed into a stone statue, its face frozen forever in a snarling rictus of defiance. Cross the stone dust off your *Adventure Sheet*.

You have defeated the Tarator! Add 1 LUCK point for your victory. Searching the creature's lair – a shallow cave adjoining the main cavern – yields little other than 3 Gold Pieces and a Giant Tooth, which you can add to your *Adventure Sheet* if you wish. Two tunnels leave this cavern and head deeper underground. You can go west (turn to **78**), or north (turn to **70**).

193



Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Giant Tooth with you? If not, return to **96** and choose again. If you have a Giant Tooth (remember to cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*), you can throw it on the ground and cast your spell on it to create a broad-shouldered Giant with long sinewy arms that appears next to you in the cramped confines of the gaol. You order the Giant to free the prisoner from her cell. It grabs hold of the barred iron door, and tears it from its hinges, throwing it onto the ground with a dull clang. Its task completed, the Giant disappears in a cloud of blue smoke.

The Black Elf steps free from her cell, and thanks you for freeing her. Suddenly, her eyes narrow in alarm, and she points her scimitar at you.

'How do I know I can trust you?' she says.

You attempt to convince the warrior maiden as to the worthiness of your quest. Roll two die and *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **108**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **115**.

194

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Galehorn with you? If not, return to **43** and choose again. If you have a Galehorn, you cast your spell and blow a note on the instrument. Immediately, a tremendous wind rushes out from the end of the Galehorn and blows both of the old doors clear off their hinges! This startles the bald, bearded priest in long robes and holding a crystal-topped staff, who was standing right behind the doors.

'What is the meaning of this outrage?' he shrieks at you.

Will you try and bribe your way out of trouble (turn to **133**), or will you attack the priest (turn to **67**)? Or, you could leave this area entirely, and try somewhere else in Daddu-Yadu (turn to **100**).

195

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Gold Piece with you? If not, return to **188** and choose again. If you have a Gold Piece, you place it on your wrist and cast your spell. The coin sticks and you can feel an invisible shield bound to your wrist. You may now fight the Salamander with extra defence. Because of this shield, you may deduct 2 from the result when rolling the dice to determine the Salamander's Attack Strength. After the fight, cross the Gold Piece from your *Adventure Sheet* as it becomes a lump of useless metal. Now, armed with your magical shield, turn to **114** and fight!

196

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Galehorn with you? If not, return to **87** and choose again. If you have a Galehorn, you cast your spell and blow a note on the instrument. Immediately, a tremendous wind rushes out from the end of the Galehorn and blows one of the Horntoads backwards into the wall, where it cracks its head on the rocks and slumps lifeless to the ground. The other guard licks its lips nervously but still charges forward to attack. Although somewhat slow and clumsy, the Horntoad is also big, strong, and powerful. In addition, not only is it skilled with the use of its halberd, but it also has plenty of natural weaponry in the form of clawed fists, curving horns, and a gaping mouth full of sharp tusks. This will be a difficult battle!

HORNTOAD GUARD	SKILL 8	STAMINA 9

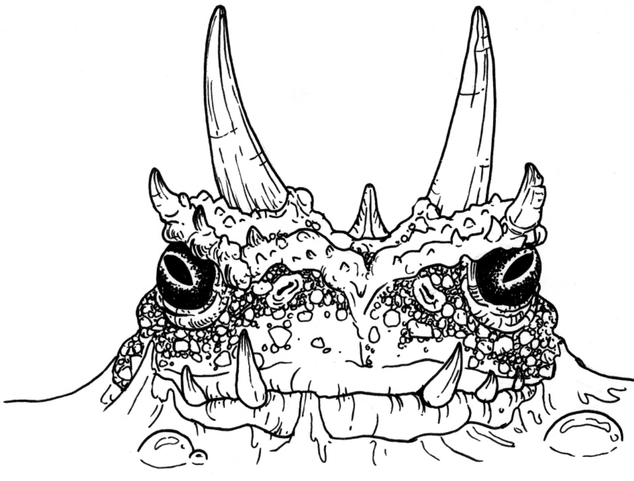
You cannot *Escape*. If you kill the Horntoad guard, turn to **102**.

197

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Cloth Skullcap with you? If not, return to **125** and choose again. If you have a Cloth Skullcap, you cast your spell, close your eyes and concentrate, trying to detect whatever thoughts (if any!) are currently passing through the feeble minds of the Dark Goblins. Apparently, they are bored, hungry, and fearful of their 'boss' – a big Orc who lives inside the mine they are guarding. You learn one other important fact that is deeply ingrained into both their memories – anyone entering the maze of tunnels that forms the mine itself, must first turn left and then travel in a clockwise direction if they wish to remain safe. You open your eyes. The Dark Goblins are still unaware of your presence. Turn back to **125** and make another choice.

198

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have any stone dust with you? If not, return to **116** and choose again. If you have some stone dust, you throw it over the slithering Mud Dragon and cast your spell. Within seconds, the beast's movements become slower and it starts to turn a pale grey in colour. It thrashes about in the mud to no avail, and is soon completely petrified. Now turned into a life-like stone statue, the Mud Dragon sinks rapidly into the depths of the mud pool and soon has completely disappeared from view. Cross the stone dust off your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **131**.



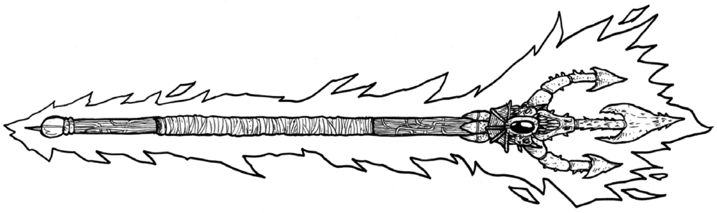
199

Deduct 1 STAMINA point. Do you have a Gold Piece with you? If not, return to **40** and choose again. If you have a Gold Piece, you place it on your wrist and cast your spell. The coin sticks and you can feel an invisible shield bound to your wrist. You may now fight the fish-creature with extra defence.

The fish-creature laughs grimly as you cast your spell 'A sorcerer! Defend yourself, spell-chanter,' it burbles in a reedy voice. 'I, Merkurio the SWORDFISH, am a master of the blade, as you shall soon discover!' However, because of your shield, you may deduct 2 from the result when rolling the dice to determine the Swordfish's Attack Strength. Resolve this combat:

SWORDFISH	SKILL 10	STAMINA 10

If you wish to flee from the Swordfish and *Escape* via the way you came, turn to **63**. If you defeat the Swordfish in battle, turn to **77**. After the fight, cross the Gold Piece off your *Adventure Sheet* as it becomes a lump of useless metal.

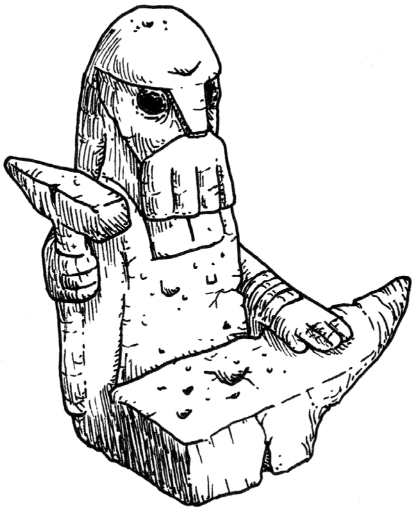


200*

Now you really have completed the quest entrusted to you by High Priest Gulanti of the Copperstone Caves. You step forward and claim the sacred Idol of Verlang, the holiest treasure of your order, and place it carefully in your backpack. You have also defeated the Salamander overlord of these tunnels, and destroyed its demonic trident accomplice. It will be some time, if at all, before the Horntoads of the Croaking Caves rise to power in these parts again. Well done, and congratulations! Upon your return, your rapid promotion through the ranks of the priests of Verlang (not that you have far to go of course!) is assured!

Ah... about your return to Daddu-Ley. You remember the words of Captain Unzana of the good ship *Schoolfish*. You are to leave the caves, climb to the top of the cliffs, and light a signal-beacon. The ship will then return for you, and pluck you off the beaches before sailing away to safety. Leaving the caves may be a problem however. You're tired and exhausted, and there's an army of Horntoads between you and the exit. Whether or not you make it back through the Croaking Caves and light the beacon to be rescued is a tale for another time. Perhaps you should have a rest here first, in the shrine of the Salamander...

THE END?



A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!

THE FACT OF FICTION

“The Fact of Fiction” is a series of articles designed to take a deeper look at the information presented in a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, whether it be in-jokes, goofs, continuity with other gamebooks, the background to the creation of the book, or similar things. In many ways it is to act like a DVD commentary for the book, telling you things that you might not have already known.

Too Late! Bitten by a large wolf, **Alexander Ballingall** fights against the sudden urge to get all hairy and howl at the moon...

Title Page

- *Howl of the Werewolf* was originally conceived prior to the demise of the Puffin Books range, but not actually penned till commissioned by Wizard Books. It first came to the notice of *Fighting Fantasy* fans in 2001 when author Jonathan Green wrote an email to John Stock, of the *AMYLASE* website, explaining the truth behind all the *Bloodbones* rumours.

Dedication

- The three “Godfathers” mentioned here, Andy, Simon and Stef, are indeed the godparents of Green’s children.

Bad Moon Rising

- Femphrey, Lendleland and Mauristatia were all first mentioned in the *Sorcery!* series of gamebooks (1983~85), with the Mauristatian province of Mortvania, coming from Keith Martin’s *Vault of the Vampire* (1989), being specifically referred to here. Being a known stronghold for Vampires, it is not surprising then to see the area given a name that refers to death (*mort* being derived from the Latin for ‘death’). Green continues the tradition by borrowing the French word for ‘Wolf ’(*loup*) in the naming of the province Lupravia (itself a borrowing from the Latin *lupus*), this one being controlled by Werewolves (see 116).
- Bathoria, another province mentioned here, is named after the Hungarian noble family Báthory, of which Elizabeth Báthory (1560~1640) is the most notorious member. She was convicted of the murder of at least 80 young women and spent the last four years of her life imprisoned in a set of bricked off rooms of Čachtice Castle. This case led to rumours that she perpetrated the deaths in order to bathe in their blood as a means of keeping her youthful appearance.

1

The hero has been surrounded by a pack of Wolves and is being advanced upon.

- Werewolves have the honour of appearing in the *Fighting Fantasy* range as far back as *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (Steve Jackson & Ian Livingstone, 1982), where the man encountered in the Boathouse on the north bank of the underground river is revealed to be a Werewolf. However, till now, they were always side encounters and not central to the plot, a factor that led to the development of this adventure.

4

The hero weighs up whether or not to visit the carnivale based on previous information imparted to them.

- Hans is a Germanic variant of the name John, meaning “God’s grace”.
- *The Gibbet Tree* is named after the method of warning criminals from their life of crime. To ‘gibbet’ a criminal was to display their body after execution from a gallows-like

The look of evil intent is in its eyes, something wholly unnatural in a wolf, something almost inhumanly human.

Jonathan Green is in many ways the new ambassador of the *Fighting Fantasy* range as Wizard Books author of choice. With six titles under his belt already and a seventh due shortly for publication, he now equals Keith Martin (*Legend of Zagor* authorship squabble not withstanding) in output, putting him behind only creators Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone for contribution to the series. With this, his fifth *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, Green cast off the last of the pre-Wizard shackles and allowed the gamebooks to emerge from the shadow of Puffin Book’s lengthy run.

In other words *Howl of the Werewolf* is effectively setting out properly for the first time the Wizard Books vision of the series. So what do we have? Complicated, without being overly so. A little darker and more graphic that perhaps the Puffin run might have gotten away with. Some whimsy and humour liberally scattered between the violence and bloodshed. Combined with the dark and brooding art of Martin McKenna it stamps itself authoritatively as the new benchmark for the range. Which makes it more of a pity that another two years would pass before a new title would be published.

As the final title in the Wizard Books “Series 1” it built on what had gone before and learnt from the series’ mistakes, ending the run on something of a high and pointing the way forward for future titles. The forthcoming *Night of the Necromancer* appears to take up the same banner and take the range into new territory in the safe and steady hands of Green and McKenna.

Roll on April!

Art: © Martin McKenna, 2010. Used with permission.

structure, sometimes within a cage of iron (a *Fighting Fantasy* depiction of this can be seen in the illustration accompanying paragraph 1 of *Dead of Night* (Jim Bambra & Stephen Hand, 1989) which is shown below). This would usually be placed in a prominent place for maximum exposure such as a crossroads.

- Leisel is a diminutive of Elizabeth, the origin of which is the Hebrew name Elisheva meaning 'God's promise'.

6

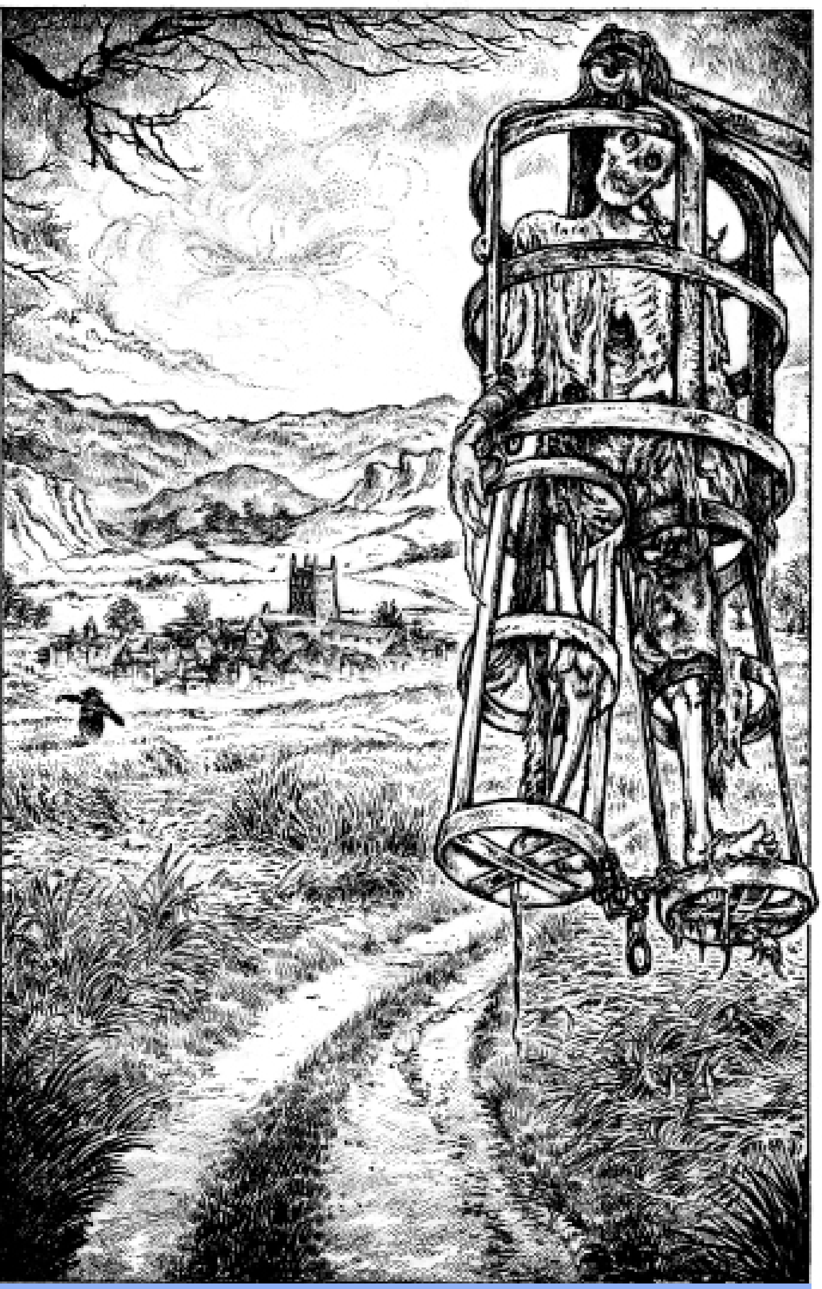
Arriving at *The Gibbet Tree* inn the hero can either take a room for the night or rough it on the moors.

- The Cloudcap Mountains were, like Mauristatia, first mentioned in the map to the *Sorcery!* series of gamebooks and would later be the location of Steve Jackson's mini boardgame *In Search of the Mungies' Gold* published in *Warlock* #5 (1985).

8

Leaving Strigoiva, the hero enters a dark forest and eventually comes across a deep pool of water.

- The town of Strigoiva gets its name from the botanic term *strigose* which means to be 'covered with short stiff adpressed hairs'. In an adventure where the hero can have the same description applied to them, the name is quite apt! Meanwhile the name of the town is also related to the word *strigoi*, which are troubled souls that rise from the dead in Romanian mythology. They have the ability to turn into a variety of animals (including wolves) and are closely related to Werewolves.



FURTHER INFORMATION

STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
HOWL OF THE WEREWOLF
BRAND NEW ADVENTURE
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION

AUTHOR: Jonathan Green
COVER ARTIST: Martin McKenna
INTERIOR ARTIST: Martin McKenna
PUBLISHED: September 6 2007
PUBLISHER: Wizard
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 29
AVAILABILITY: In print.

10

The hero has an encounter with the Countess of Maun Tower, someone who has their own plans for the hero.

- Is Maun Tower perhaps named after the Scottish term to mean 'must' or 'intend', possibly reflecting the actions of the Countess as she pushes her intentions onto the hero?
- "Deliugeb" is one of several codewords used in the gamebook and draws on a method first employed in one of Green's favourite titles from the range: *Moonrunner* (Hand, 1992). In each instance the codeword is simply an English word written backwards. See also 235 for a further possible nod to *Moonrunner*.

12

After some time spent searching, Ulrich has managed to locate some Belladonna.

- Ulrich is another name that is of Germanic origin and can mean "noble leader". It is an amusing twist of the Little Red Riding Hood folktale, the hero of this gamebook in effect taking on the role of Red Riding Hood in being rescued by the woodcutter Ulrich!
- Belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*) is also commonly known as Deadly Nightshade and a plant of which both leaves and berries are extremely toxic. It has been used over the centuries as a means of poisoning people and is also the plant from which the drug Atropine is derived. It is also reputed to be a cure for lycanthropy, although where such a claim originates is not known.

14

Entering a vast cavern within Sundered Peak, the hero is set upon by Giant Spider hatchlings.

- The Death's Head Spider (*Celaenia kinbergi*) is better known as a Bird-dropping Spider or Orchard Spider. Luckily in real life the average size of these spiders is about 12mm for the female and smaller for the male! (see "Giant Spiders")

15

After spending two days with the carnivale people, the hero leaves them in order to head towards Vargenhof.

- *balci* is a word of Turkish origin and has the meaning ‘honey seller’. As this is where the carnivale has set up shop, the term for the town is most fitting given the nature of the carnivale.
- *vargenhof* is two meanings put together, translating roughly from Germanic into ‘wolf manor’, which given the situation going on with the head of the town shouldn’t come as a surprise!

16

The hero wakes up in a damp cell and is quickly set upon by some giant Cockroaches.

- One of several instances of giant-like insects in the gamebook (other encounters occur at 38, 95, 227, 242, 262, 401 and 406). In reality *Blaberus giganteus* are generally considered to be the biggest cockroaches, clocking in at 90mm in length. It can be found in Central and northern areas of South America. Green featured such creatures in his first gamebook *Spellbreaker* (1993).

18

The journey to the Shrine of Saint Crucius is interrupted by the appearance of the Shuck.

- The Shuck is based on the Black Shuck, a ghostly dog believed to haunt the coastlines of Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex with tales of the “doom dog” in existence before the arrival of the Vikings. A notable appearance occurred in 1557 at the church of Blythburgh in Suffolk where the appearance of the Shuck led to the deaths to two people, the collapse of the church tower, and the creation of scorch marks on the floor as it departed that can still be seen today. Meanwhile it is generally accepted that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s (1859~1930) Sherlock Holmes tale *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901/2) is based on this legend. Green notes that the description of the in dog in the song *Black Shuck*, from the album *Permission to Land* (2003) by The Darkness, directly influenced his own depiction of the Shuck in the book.
- Saint Crucius has a name deriving from the word “crucifixion”, the name for a primarily Roman means of execution that began roughly around 6th Century BC and continued till it was abolished by Emperor Constantine I in 337 AD.

19

In the terrified town of Wulfenstein the hero is stopped in the deserted street by a beggar.

- Wulfenstein is another name derived from the word ‘wolf’, here with “wulfen” essentially being ‘wolf’ and *stein* meaning ‘stone’ in German. In this case the town shares its name with the 1981 computer game *Castle Wolfenstein*, which involved the player moving through a Nazi SS Stormtrooper infested castle in search of secret war plans. A 3D version of the game would become the precursor to games like *Doom* (1993) and *Quake* (1996).

21

The Wolf-beast may be slain, but the hero has other entanglements not so easily escaped from.

- Isolde has her name drawn from the Arthurian story of Tristan and Iseult, Isolde being a variation of Iseult. In the tale she is a princess of Ireland and begins an affair with Sir Tristan which leads eventually to both their deaths.
- Count Varcolac takes his name from Romanian folklore, where *vârcolac* is borrowed from the Slavic for werewolf.

22

It is a battle against the Golem and the forces of nature come to the hero’s aid.

- The Golem is derived from Jewish folklore, following in the footsteps of the creation of Adam from the dust (see *Genesis* 2 in *The Bible*) by being a creature created from mud itself. Folklore holds that either the inscription of magic or religious words on the Golem itself (either forehead or body) or on a piece of paper placed in the creature’s mouth was the means by which the Golem was usually animated. The most famous tale involving a Golem is that of Judah Loew ben Bezalel (c.1520~1609), a rabbi in late 16th Century Prague. A modern tale involving a Golem is that of *Kaddish*, an episode from Season Four of *The X Files* (broadcast in 1997). (see 120)
- The claim of creating the first lightning rod is generally given to Benjamin Franklin (1706~1790) who invented one in 1749, although the Nevyansk Tower in Russia (built between 1725 and 1732) may have beaten him to it.

26

The hero listens to the patter of the carnivale master and is faced with attending the carnivale or not.

- Grendel, mentioned here as “savage”, is taken from the Old English epic heroic poem *Beowulf* (anon., c.8th~11th Century), where he is the first of three monsters fought and slain by the hero of the title. The description of Grendel in the poem is, like author Jonathan Green’s, scarce on detail, with the only concrete detail being his descent from the biblical Cain (see *Genesis* 4 in *The Bible*). *Beowulf* itself was most recently adapted into a film by Robert Zemeckis in 2007. Green had previously featured a Grendel-like creature, the Fen Beast, in *Spellbreaker*.
- The original “house of mirrors” was created by Peter Stuyvesant (c.1612~1672), then governor of New Amsterdam (the settlement that became New York), in 1651 and was based on the hall of mirrors to be found in the palace of Versailles.
- Puppetry has been traced as far back as 2000 BC where puppets were used in Egypt. The term “marionette” was coined around 1600 AD.
- Zelda is a diminutive based on the name Griselda, generally held to mean ‘dark battle’ in ancient Germanic. Is her name meant to foreshadow the events foretold by her when the hero visits in her tent?

34

The hero chooses to attempt to break open the Obsidian Mirror in order to learn its secrets.

- Obsidian is a naturally occurring form of volcanic glass, used chiefly throughout history as a means of creating cutting tools or weapons due to the combination of sharp and serrated edges that cut obsidian can supply. Quite how well the material would work as a mirror would presumably be down to whatever magic was involved in the creation of the mirror!

37

The cottage is attacked by a pack of wolves, the hero helping Grandmother Zekova and Ulrich defend.

- The Signet ring was originally developed by Roman society as a means of validating legal documents and became a symbol of authority and power. This would not really translate into European society till they became popular once more in the 17th Century.

38

The swirling mass of insects swarm together to take on a vaguely humanoid form.

- The concept of a mass of insects coming together to take on a human shape is one that has appeared in several differ-

GIANT SPIDERS

Giant Spiders of many kinds are a favourite of *Fighting Fantasy* authors, having previously appeared in *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (Steve Jackson & Ian Livingstone, 1982), *The Forest of Doom* (Livingstone, 1983), *Deathtrap Dungeon* (Livingstone, 1984), *Island of the Lizard King* (Livingstone, 1984), *Scorpion Swamp* (Steve Jackson*, 1984), *The Dervish Stone* (Paul Struth, 1985), *Dungeon of Justice* (Jonathan Ford, 1985), *Sword of the Samurai* (Mark Smith & Jamie Thomson, 1986), *Trial of Champions* (Livingstone, 1986), *The Warrior's Way* (Andrew Chapman & Martin Allen, 1986), *Masks of Mayhem* (Robin Waterfield, 1986), *Beneath Nightmare Castle* (Peter Darvill-Evans, 1987), *Midnight Rogue* (Graeme Davis, 1987), *Daggers of Darkness* (Luke Sharp, 1988), *Armies of Death* (Livingstone, 1988), *Portal of Evil* (Darvill-Evans, 1989), *Siege of Sardath* (Keith P. Phillips, 1992), *Spellbreaker* (Jonathan Green, 1993), *Deathmoor* (Waterfield, 1994), *Knights of Doom* (Green, 1994), *Revenge of the Vampire* (Keith Martin, 1995) and *Eye of the Dragon* (Livingstone, 2005).

* The US game designer.

ent media. More notable examples of this include the titular character from the film *Candyman* (1992) who has a body made of bees, the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episodes *What's My Line* parts one and two (both 1997) where the character of Norman Pfister is made entirely from maggots, and the H.P. Lovecraft (1890~1937) short story *The Festival* (1925) where the narrator begins to suspect people around him at a strange festival to be "things have learnt to walk that ought to crawl".

40
Before sunset the hero and the headman Konrad share a meal together.

- Konrad is another Germanic language borrowing, this time the name meaning 'bold advisor', something which fits neatly with the character's role as headman of the village.
- The concept of a headless horseman is most famously depicted in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (1820) by Washington Irving (1783~1859), most recently adapted as *Sleepy Hollow* by Tim Burton in 1999. It in turn is most likely based on the Dullahan, a part of Irish folklore that is probably also the basis of the tale of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (anon, c. late 14th Century).
- The Howling as they are named, borrow their title from that of Gary Brandner's (b.1933) 1977 horror novel (which was turned into a film in 1981) that is – no surprise here – about werewolves! Both book and film spawned several sequels.

41
The hero is welcomed to Crookshank's Cabinet of Curiosities by a man eating fire.

- Fire eating was originally a part of Hindu, Fakir, and Sadhu religious events as a symbol of spiritual attainment, with some evidence that the practice dates as far back as ancient Egyptian times. By the late 1880s it had become a standard feature of many sideshow acts which is how it is presented here.
- Who is Crookshank? With the etymology of crook meaning 'a bend' and shank meaning the 'lower part of the leg', are we meant to picture someone with a bent or crippled leg? Or is it simply either a reference to the kneazle pet cat of Hermione Granger's in J.K. Rowling's (b.1965) *Harry Potter* series or BBC presenter Dan Cruickshank (b.1949)?

46
Almost seemingly in the middle of nowhere, the hero finds a signpost giving directions.

- A goof with the signpost as while it reads "north-west, south-west, north-east and north-west", it should say "north-west, south-west, north-east and south-east".

47
The hero challenges Count Varcolac to fight, only to be set upon by two Dire Wolves.

- The ability "The Call of the Wild" could have its name taken from the novel (1903) by Jack London (1876~1916). It is a tale that follows the exploits of a dog named Buck as he regains his wild instincts to become more like dogs were before their domestication by man.
- The Dire Wolf is a species of wolf which became extinct roughly 10 000 years ago. It was based in the Americas and when the slower mammal species it hunted died out it was unable to compete, first with the Grey Wolf, which spread into the region from Eurasia via the Bering Strait land bridge, and then with humans, both of which were better equipped at hunting the remaining faster moving species.

48
Clinging to the top of the carriage, the hero makes his escape from the pack of wolves.

- Katya is a diminutive of the Russian name Yekaterina, itself a variation on the Greek name Katherine. The name means 'pure' and is a possible reflection of her actions in the gamebook.

54
Breaking the mesmerising gaze of the Countess of Maun Tower causes her to order her manservant to change and attack.

- Writer Jonathan Green cites on his blog the inspirations for the Werebat as Dracula's man-bat form from the film *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) and also the comic character of Dr. Kirk Langstrom who, via a serum designed to cure deafness, is transformed into Man-Bat. Man-Bat is the creation of writer Frank Robbins (1917~1994) and artist Neal Adams (b.1941) and first appeared in *Detective Comics* in 1970.

54
There is quite a variety of items on display that can be purchased from the Alchemist.

- Plumbus Gelt is an interesting pun of a name for an Alchemist. Alchemists are generally know for the exercise of trying through various means, both scientific and arcane, to convert lead (*plumbum* in Latin) into gold (the tax often paid by the English under Anglo-Saxon and Norman kings was one of generally gold and known as a *geld*).

58
A ring of bell brings the hero face to face with one of the monks of the abbey.

- Black Monks are another name for Benedictine Monks, although this name is based purely on the colour of their robes and not on any nefarious activities. Perhaps author Jonathan Green was thinking more along the lines of the D20/*Ars Magica* supplement *The Black Monks of Glastonbury* (David Chart, 2003)? Meanwhile on his blog, Green cites Umberto Eco's (b.1932) novel *Il nome della rosa* (trans: *The Name of the Rose*, 1980) as inspiration for the abbey setting.

62
The werebeast of Vargenhof has been revealed and the hero quick pursues it.

- *burgomaster* is a Germanic term that is essentially translated as 'town mayor', while the surname Straub is also of Germanic origin and indicates the beast behind the man, *straub* meaning 'one with bushy or bristly hair'.

67
The hero throws the silver dagger they have in the direction of the Spider Queen.

- The Spider-Queen here indulges in some very Golem-like reactions, treating the silver dagger as the former Hobbit did the One Ring in *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings* (1954/55), both by J.R.R. Tolkien (1892~1973).

73
With the Cadaver dead, the hero and Van Richten set out for the Tower of Maun.

- Kafka is most likely named after Franz Kafka (1883~1924), a famous writer whose influential works include *The Metamorphosis* (see 406 for more details). He however did not become famous till the majority of his works were published posthumously and his popularity grew when they became widely available in English in the late 1940s.
- We are presented with the Vampire Hunter Van Richten, no doubt based on the fictional character Professor Abraham Van Helsing from Bram Stoker's (1847~1912) novel *Dracula* (1897), although his physical appearance and demeanour (as the former can be seen in 478, reprinted in this issue on page 82) are more in keeping with the interpretation of the character as portrayed in the film *Van Helsing* (2004) by Hugh Jackman.
- ALARM points as a means of tracking the hero's detection within a building featured previously in *The Keep of the Lich-Lord* (Dave Morris & Jamie Thomson, 1990).

76
With the spell broken, Meg is carried off into the afterlife by the ghost of Lord Lucre.

- Lucre is from *lucrum*, the Latin for gaining wealth (i.e. money). In the translation into English in the King James edition of *The Bible* this was rendered in context as "not greedy of filthy lucre" (*1 Timothey* 3). From this "filthy lucre" became a slang term for money and hence here Lord Lucre's nickname.

83
Backtracking through the ruins the hero is soon set upon by a selection of malevolent creatures.

- The Grinnygogs battled here appear to be derived from the children's novel *The Witches and the Grinnygog* (1981) by Dorothy Edwards (1914~1982), which was adapted for television in the UK in 1983. In the book a church is moved to a new site and in the process a statue from it – the Grinnygog – goes missing, leading to revelations of the local town's past. According to his blog, they are also influenced by the Malus from the 1984 *Doctor Who* adventure *The Awakening* (see 154).

87
There soon becomes a very good chance that the hero is going to become lost on Fenmoor.

- In the UK there is a close namesake to Fenmoor in Fen Moor, located in North Yorkshire as part of the Lockton High Moor near the RAF Fylingdales radar base installation.

95
The hero is forced to fight against several examples of the Death's Head Beetle.

- The concept of a Death's Head Beetle arises with Edgar Allen Poe's (1809~1849) short story *The Gold-Bug* (1843) which features an invented gold beetle with "death's head" markings. An actual insect with such markings is *Blaberus craniifer*, the Death's Head Cockroach (see 16 and 406 for more Cockroach imagery). Similar creatures in *Fighting Fantasy* are to be found in *Creature of Havoc*'s (Jackson, 1986) Carrion Bugs.

98
An attempt to sleep out in the open fails when the hero is set upon by a Moth-Man.

- The Moth-Man was a creature supposedly first sighted in the state of West Virginia in the US in 1966 and several times afterwards in the year that followed. It has since entered US folklore and has been the subject of episodes from various television series (including *The X Files* (*Detour*, 1997)) and the 2002 film *The Mothman Prophecies*, based on a book (1975) of the same name by John Keel (1930~2009).

103
Within the woods the hero encounters an Ice Sprite which is blocking their passages through the woods.

- The Ice Sprite is clearly inspired by the Judderman of the Metz schnapps adverts (a now discontinued drink from Bacardi). At 299 the adventure also "borrows" from the voice-over of the advert as well for the poem about Ice Sprites.

110
The hero finds themselves in the precarious position of falling through air with no safety net in sight.

- Garou Gorge takes its cue once more from the subject of the gamebook. "Garou" is taken from the French word *loup-garou* which means Werewolf.

116
In the village square an impromptu town meeting is taking place involving people wielding weapons.

- The imagery of the angry mob as a group of people wielding torches and pitchforks (as also seen in the minor illustration on the same page) has its perhaps most recognisable reference point in the 1931 film adaption of *Frankenstein* in which a similar mob attacks Doctor Frankenstein's laboratory. A similar mob can be found in 142 of *Dead of Night* while other nods to the *Frankentein* imagery can be found in the Kauderwelsch Monster in *Legend of the Shadow Warriors* (Hand, 1991) and *Moonrunner*, the Corpse Golem of *Revenge of the Vampire* (Martin, 1995), the Lurcher of *Spellbreaker,* and the original Flesh Golem of *Out of the Pit* (Ed. Marc Gascoigne, 1985).
- Prtizbad and Saarven are both locations that originally feature on the colour map included with *Vault of the Vampire* (see "Bad Moon Rising").

120
The hero has come across the experiments of Professor Arcanum and is now in danger.

- Professor Arcanum draws his name from the plural for *arcana* which means secrets and mysteries.
- The Professor's actions here are clearly a riff on Doctor Frankenstein and his monster from Mary Shelly's (1797~1851) famous novel *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818). Although the monster in question here is later described as being a "Golem Hulk" (paragraph 152), its appearance in Martin McKenna's illustration is more likely based on the various adaptations of Shelly's tale which feature the monster assembled from one or more dead bodies (see 116), as opposed to the creature of the novel which is more akin to a true Golem (see 22).

127
Invoking the correct words, the hero is able to use the mirror to their advantage.

- The interaction with the mirror here is obviously taken from the classic mirror phrase “Mirror, mirror, on the wall...” from the folktale of Snow White, a feature of the German version of the tale (other versions don’t always have the mirror).

128
Stuck in the swamp, the hero attempts to escape only to encounter a Will-o’-the-Wisp.

- The Will-o’-the-Wisp is a chemical reaction involving the oxidation of phosphine and methane which produces a flickering, low-heat flame usually seen over swamps, bogs, or marshes. In folklore the Will-o’-the-Wisp has been seen as malicious creature that often leads travellers astray. They have been previously seen in *Scorpion Swamp* and *The Warlock’s Way* (Andrew Chapman & Martin Allen, 1986) amongst other entries in the *Fighting Fantasy* series.

137
The baby has changed into a Changeling and the hero must engage it in battle.

- Changelings are a creature found in European folklore, often described as a legendary creature (fairies are the most common) which has taken the place of a human child. The idea of Changelings being afraid of iron comes from Scandinavian folktales. It is a very different creature of the same name that features in *Out of the Pit*.

154
The hero climbs the pit shaft to emerge into a subterranean chamber – home of the Malice.

- The Malice shares its name with the entity that possesses Orghuz in *Chasms of Malice* (Luke Sharp, 1987), although in that instance the creature has no physical form.
- According to his blog, like the Grinnygogs (see 83) Green based the physical appearance of the Malice on the Malus from *The Awakening*, a 1984 *Doctor Who* adventure starring Peter Davison (b.1951).

157
Konrad explains about the Shuck that has been terrifying Father Corran at the local shrine.

- *corran* is of an Irish origin and has the meaning ‘spear-bearer’.

163
Professor Arcanum’s assistant Igor attempts to stop the hero from reaching the laboratory.

- Igor (or Ygor) as a name for a deformed assistant to a mad scientist is a cliché that seems to have developed at some point prior to the 1950s, although the name and/or deformities came and went depending on the film up to an including the 1950s. An example of this is the 1931 *Frankenstein* (see 116) where Doctor Frankenstein has a hunch-backed assistant played by Dwight Frye, but the assistant is named Fritz. Previous Igor servants in the *Fighting Fantasy* range can be found in *House of Hell* (Jackson, 1984) and *Revenge of the Vampire*.

165
The hero and Vereticus discuss silver daggers and Serpensa the Snakewoman.

- Saint Patrick of Ireland (c.387-493) is held in legend to have cursed the Welsh King Vereticus by turning him into a werewolf.

171
A drink of vodka restores some vitality to the hero, but leaves their abilities impaired.

- Vodka appears to have begun life as part of medicines and cosmetics in Northern, Central and Eastern European countries, and while it had become a form of drink by the 1500s, it would not be until the middle of the 18th Century that what is recognised as modern Vodka would be created. The use of potatoes in the creation of the product does not appear to have become commonplace until the beginning of the 19th Century.

182
Having killed Van Richten, the hero searches the body for anything of use.

- The flintlock mechanism was introduced in about 1630, replacing previous methods of firearm-ignition and, with minor changes, would remain in regular use until the 1800s. For more on gunpowder and related weaponry, please see the article “bang!” on page 78.

184
Professor Arcanum consumes a potion which transforms him, unleashing his animal side.

- In referring to the changed professor as “Arcanum Unbound”, is Green making a deliberate reference to the play *Prometheus Unbound* (1820) by Percy Shelley (1792~1822), husband of Mary Shelley on whose novel *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* Arcanum is based?

208
In a room with a mirror the hero is set upon by a Golem, this one made entirely of wax.

- Something similar to the Wax Golem (see 22 for more) has been encountered before: the candle creature in paragraph 365 of *Sky Lord* (Allen, 1988).

210
Vereticus talks to the hero of the Order of the Black Rose and the Cadre Infernal.

- Aranaea the Spider-Queen derives her name, appropriately, from the Order name for Spiders in the biological classification taxonomic ranks. Interestingly, Jonathan Green had featured a different Spider-Queen, Veracna, at 366 of *Knights of Doom*.

211
The hero has been fruitlessly searching the sump, only to attract the attention of a Giant Tapeworm.

- Unfortunately for the easily squeamish, tapeworms can indeed reach epic proportions. The beef tapeworm (*Taenia saginata*) can reach up to 12~20 metres in length, although in other considerations such as width and depth they remain on the slight side as per their descriptive name. The *larger* version encountered here has previously appeared in *Trial of Champions* and *Spellbreaker*.

220
Hans enters into conversation with the hero, explaining about his missing sister.

- Scarton was first mentioned as a location within the Old World in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* (Ed. Gascoigne, 1986).

226
The landlord’s daughter Meg is attempting to complete a dark ritual to bring back her lover to life.

- Meg, despite the close resemblance, is *not*, according to the artist Martin McKenna, based on the actress Helena Bonham-Carter (b.1966) but instead on a friend of his.

227
In a flooded tunnel the hero is soon attacked by a couple of Giant Centipedes.

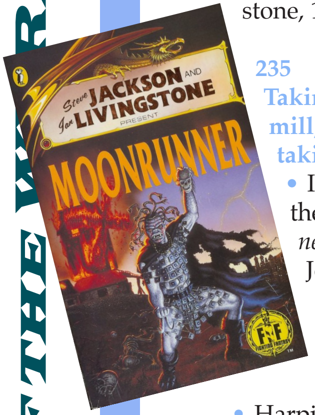
- In reality the largest centipede is the *Scolopendra gigantea* (Amazonian giant centipede), which reaches over 30cm in length, although the extinct *Euphoberia* could reach upwards of 1 metre. Giant Centipedes have previously featured in (a non-exhaustive list) *City of Thieves* (Livingstone, 1983), *Temple of Terror* (Livingstone, 1985), *Trial of Champions*, and *Portal of Evil* (Peter Darvill-Evans, 1989). An in depth encounter with one is described in *Dungeoneer* (Gascoigne &

Pete Tamlyn, 1989) on pages 293~299.

232

The hero is attacked by a Stone Griffin while making an investigation of a mirror.

- Griffins appear as far back in history as 5th~4th Century BC around the Persian Empire of the time and were considered protectors from evil. They have previously appeared in *Caverns of the Snow Witch* (Livingstone, 1984), *Talisman of Death* (Jamie Thomson & Mark Smith, 1984), *Creature of Havoc* and *Crypt of the Sorcerer* (Livingstone, 1987) amongst others.



235

Taking shelter in a seemingly abandoned windmill, the hero soon realises that something is taking place there.

- Is the use of a windmill a deliberate nod to the events involving Conrad Zaar in *Moonrunner* (see 10 for another) on the part of author Jonathan Green?

240

Fleeing the tower, the hero believe they are safe only to be set upon by a Harpy.

- Harpies derive from Greek myth, although their now common form of a cross between a woman and a bird is misconception based on confusion with the myth of the Sirens, as their original description is closer to that of a winged human. Previous appearances in *Fighting Fantasy* texts include *Kharé – Cityport of Traps* (Jackson, 1984), *Temple of Terror*, *Phantoms of Fear* (Waterfield, 1987) and *Return to Firetop Mountain* (Livingstone, 1992).

248

A description of the Werewolf ability to fight unarmed named as “Red in Tooth and Claw”.

- The phrase “red in tooth and claw” arises in Canto 56 of the poem *In Memoriam A.H.H.* (1849) by Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809~1892) where it is a reference to humanity. Although written prior to Charles Darwin’s (1809~1882) book *On the Origin of Species* (1859), the phrase was adopted as evoking the process of natural selection and has since been used by both those for or against the theory of evolution. More recently, “Tooth and Claw” was featured as the title of a *Doctor Who* episode about werewolves (2006) starring David Tennant (b.1971).

255

The hero has come to Maun Tower to ask for the help of Countess Isolde and is escorted to her by her manservant.

- While the constellations of Titan were first set out in *Titan – The fighting Fantasy World*, this is the first time that the concept of a zodiac is mentioned within the canon of *Fighting Fantasy*.

260

Vereticus has created a concoction for the hero to drink involving a mixture of items.

- Aconitum, sometimes known by the names Wolfsbane, Aconite and several other titles, is a flowering plant of the Buttercup family which can prove deadly if consumed. Notably, poisoning can also occur through touch as the toxin is easily absorbed via the skin. In folklore the plant is alternately used as a means of causing someone to become a Werewolf, or as a means to repel or destroy a Werewolf.

270

The farmer and his wife attempt to prevent the hero from striking at the Changeling.

- *bauer* is the German for ‘farmer’, making the man effectively “Farmer Farmer”! Or is it simply a case of writer Jonathan Green being a fan of the Jack Bauer character played by Kiefer Sutherland (b.1966) in the television show *24*?

272

Whilst crossing Fenmoor the hero is attacked by a pair of Fog Devils.

- Originally appearing in *Out of the Pit*, Fog Devils have also appeared in *Phantoms of Fear*.

280

The witch causes a toad to swell to the size of a pony as a means of fighting the hero.

- Giant Toads first featured in *Fighting Fantasy – The Introductory Role-playing Game* (Jackson, 1984) and have since appeared in *The Warrior’s Way* (Chapman & Allen, 1986).

288

The hero has come across the camp belonging to some gypsies.

- The gypsies are called the Mortani and presumably draw their name from the Latin for death, *mort*.

301

Turning to books for information, the hero makes use of *Grymm’s Folk-lore of Lupravia*.

- The book is clearly named after *Children’s and Household Tales* (1812), now more commonly known as *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*. This was a collection of folktales put together by Jacob (1785~1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786~1859).
- The line “extracting the stone from the toad’s head” is in reference to the myth that toadstones, also known as bufonite among many other names, could be found inside toads. They were believed to be an antidote to poison much in the same way bezoars are in the *Harry Potter* novels.
- Ducking stools were a medieval form of punishment for lesser crimes and did not always involve the submersion of the criminal in water as the purpose was more social humiliation than physical punishment. It was also used in many cases involving accusations of witchcraft, for which it is mostly remembered. The last case involving the use of a ducking stool was in 1817.

306

The hero is attacked by Count Varcolac’s three Wolf Brides.

- “Lamb to the slaughter” arises from the King James translation of *The Bible*, coming from *Jeremiah 11* (“But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter...”).
- The phrase “wolf in sheep’s clothing” derives from one of Aesop’s Fables of the same name, the collection being a series of cautionary tales attributed to a Greek slave living in 5th Century BC. The collection, known collectively today under the name Aesop’s Fables, was compiled in the 14th Century.

310

In the artificer’s workshop the hero comes across a very strange suit of armour.

- Automatons have existed at least since the times of ancient Greece and China, although what people remember today as clockwork automata are products of renewed interest during the period 1860~1910. One of the most famous examples of automata was known as “the Turk”, created in 1769 by Wolfgang von Kempelen. This was later to revealed in the 1800s to have been a hoax, a human operating the “automata” from a hidden position. Most recently, clockwork “men” have been seen in the 2006 *Doctor Who* episode *The Girl in the Fireplace* and the 2008 film *Hellboy II: The Golden Army*.

316

The hero faces a collection of animated puppets after invading the Puppetmaster’s domain.

- Malevolent puppets have been previously seen many times on television and film. Examples from television include the 1963 *The Twilight Zone* episode *Living Doll* starring Telly Savalas (1922~1994), the 1977 *Doctor Who* adventure *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* starring Tom Baker (b.1934) and the 1992 *The Simpsons* episode *Treehouse of Horror III* instalment *Clown Without Pity*. Examples on film include *Devil Doll* (1964), *Dolls* (1987), *Child’s Play* (1988), and *Puppet Master* (1989).

328

A text on the Cadre Infernal proves to be very dry reading for the hero.

- The War of the Four Kingdoms mentioned here was originally detailed in the PuzzleQuest book *The Tasks of Tantalon* (Jackson, 1985).

334

Bursting into the meeting hall the hero is faced with five choices for the werebeast.

- Johannes is the Latin variation of John (see 4 for more), Gregor is a Germanic variant of Gregory, meaning ‘watchful’ and Pitor is the Polish version of Peter, meaning ‘rock’. Meanwhile Šorn is either the Slovenian version of the Germanic *schorn*, the name for someone who works with a shovel, or it means to obtain food and/or lodging by presuming on another’s generosity.

343

The hero reads a book about the origins of the Wulfen family.

- *dragomir* is a name of Slavic origin, meaning either ‘he who values peace’ or ‘he who is very precious’. The first is the most likely interpretation here given Dragomir’s slaying of the head of the Vampire clan seeking to control Lupravia.

378

With the gypsies gone, the hero discovers a Moonstone Amulet in their pack.

- Moonstone is a form of gemstone created by the mixing of two different types of Feldspar. These form into separated layers within the stone and give it the strange glow for which it is named.

382

Grandmother Zekova’s cottage is surrounded by Wolves and the Werewolf demands entry.

- The Werewolf quotes several lines from the fairy-tale *Three Little Pigs* which first appeared in printed form in about 1843, although the story is believed to be of much older origins.

388

The hero is trapped underwater in the pool by a very determined Water-Wyrd.

- In his blog Jonathan Green attributes the inspiration of the Water-Wyrd to the figure of English folklore Jenny Greenteeth. A river hag, the creature was believed to pull both children and the elderly down into the water and drwon them. A further source of inspiration that Green notes is the episode *Fearnot* of the series *Jim Henson’s The Storyteller* (1988), itself based on the German tale *The Story of the Youth Who Went Forth to Learn What Fear Was* which appeared in *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*.

404

Vereticus agrees to help the hero is their attempt to rid themselves of their curse.

- Hamaskis, the god of Learning and Sorcery mentioned here, was first detailed in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* along with the majority of the Titan pantheon of deities.

406

Led through the abbey, the hero is startled when the cowl of the monk’s habit falls away to reveal a disturbing sight.

- Human-sized cockroaches (see 16) have been with us ever since Franz Kafka (see 73) told the story of Gregor Samsa turning into one in the novella *Die Verwandlung* (trans: *The Metamorphosis*, 1915), although many critics have later argued that cockroach is an inaccurate translation of what Samsa turns into. Since the book was published it has grown to become widely considered as a seminal work of the 20th Century. Writer Jonathan Green also noted on his blog the influence of such films as David Cronenberg’s version of *The Fly* (1986) and *Mimic* (1997).

424

Several panes of stained glass leap from the window to form a knight bent on attacking the hero.

- As noted in his blog, the dangerous stained-glass knight is based on a sequence from the 1985 film *Young Sherlock Holmes* (also known in the UK as *Young Sherlock Holmes and the Pyramid of Fear*) in which a priest is harassed by a hallucination of a stained-glass knight. The effect is notable for being the first fully photorealistic CGI character in a film, put together by John Lasseter, now chief creative officer of Pixar.

434

The hero finishes their meal and then takes a room as the inn before leaving the town the following morning.

- *The Suckling Pig* inn takes its name from a piglet fed on its mother’s milk and slaughtered between the ages of two and six weeks. The animal is then usually cooked whole.

436

The slaying of a Werewolf leads to a man calling down a further curse on the hero.

- Almor, the Lord of Wolves mentioned here, was first detailed in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*.

442

The hero enters a large chamber to find that it is the home of the Spider-Queen.

- The appearance of the Spider-Queen appears to be very much based on the appearance of the Racnoss Empress from the 2006 *Doctor Who* adventure *The Runaway Bride* starring David Tennant.

445

At the carnivale members of the public are encouraged to try their luck against the Grendel in the cage.

- Cage fighting, better known as Mixed Martial Arts, has its roots in mixed style contests in the early 1900s, but a modern competition did not emerge until 1993 and the formation of the Ultimate Fighting Championships.

448

With the Lady of the Tower now aware of the hero’s presence, the hero is set upon.

- *tenebrae* is Latin for ‘shadows’.

460

While crossing a blighted cornfield, the hero is attacked by two scarecrows.

- Dr. Jonathan Crane as the DC Comics villain “Scarecrow” made his debut in *Worlds Finest Comics* in 1941 and has most recently appeared in the films *Batman Begins* (2005) and *The Dark Knight* (2009). Evil scarecrows also feature in the films *Scarecrows* (1988) and *Jeepers Creepers* (2001), and more recently in the 2007 *Doctor Who* adventure *Human Nature* starring David Tennant. Such creatures have appeared in *Fighting Fantasy* as Black Jack, the village scarecrow, in *Dead of Night* and as the Haggworts in *Legend of the Shadow Warriors*. FF

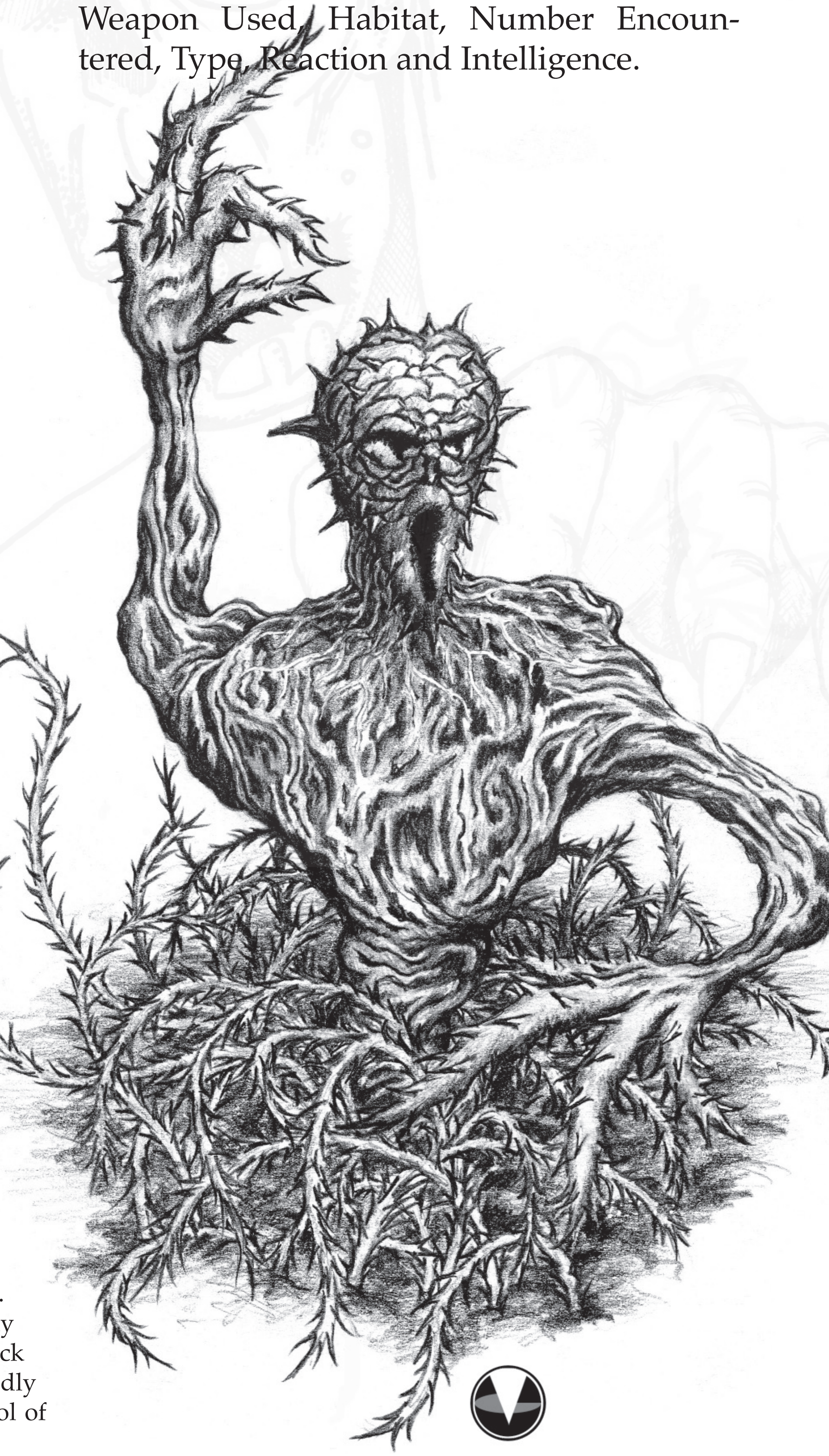
OUT OF
THE PIT

Every issue we give you **Out of the Pit** – a mini-bestiary of monsters drawn from across the world of Titan and beyond. Each illustrated creature entry is broken down into two sections: one concerns game statistics, and the other is a longer description of the creature and its special features. The statistics* listed for each creature are: SKILL, STAMINA, Attacks, Weapon Used, Habitat, Number Encountered, Type, Reaction and Intelligence.

For the second issue of *Fighting Fantazine* we present a selection of reader submissions by Victor Cheng and Matt Cruse. Victor Cheng also kindly provided the illustrations. Thanks guys! Feel free to submit your own creatures for inclusion in "Out of the Pit". Make sure they conform to the format presented here and send them to me, Andrew Wright, the "Out of the Pit" Editor, at **greyarea13@hotmail.com** – I look forward to reading your fearsome and fiendish contributions!

dark tidings

I entered the tumbledown hut on the edge of the Outlands and was greeted curtly by the old woman who dwelled inside. 'Sit down!' she screeched, and threw some scraps of papyri at me, all bearing sketches of hideous creatures. 'Great games are afoot!' she said. 'New things are crawling from out of the Pit and into the lands of men. Take these scrolls and warn your people. They will know what to do!' I fled the hut and saddled my horse, urging it into a gallop down the road that led back to the heartland of the kingdom. The round trip was rapidly tiring my steed however. Perhaps there would be a pool of water in that thorny thicket over there on the left...



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*An explanation of all these statistics (except "Weapon Used") can be found in the original *Out of the Pit* (p.15/11-13. See also *Warlock* #7 p.10-11). An explanation of the "Weapon Used" category can be found in *Dungeoneer* (p.153-156 and 164-165).

CORPSE BRAMBLER
by Victor Cheng

SKILL: 8
STAMINA: 11
ATTACKS: 2
WEAPONS USED: Thorny Hands (as per Large Claw)
HABITAT: Forests
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1
TYPE: Plant Monster
REACTION: Unfriendly
INTELLIGENCE: Average

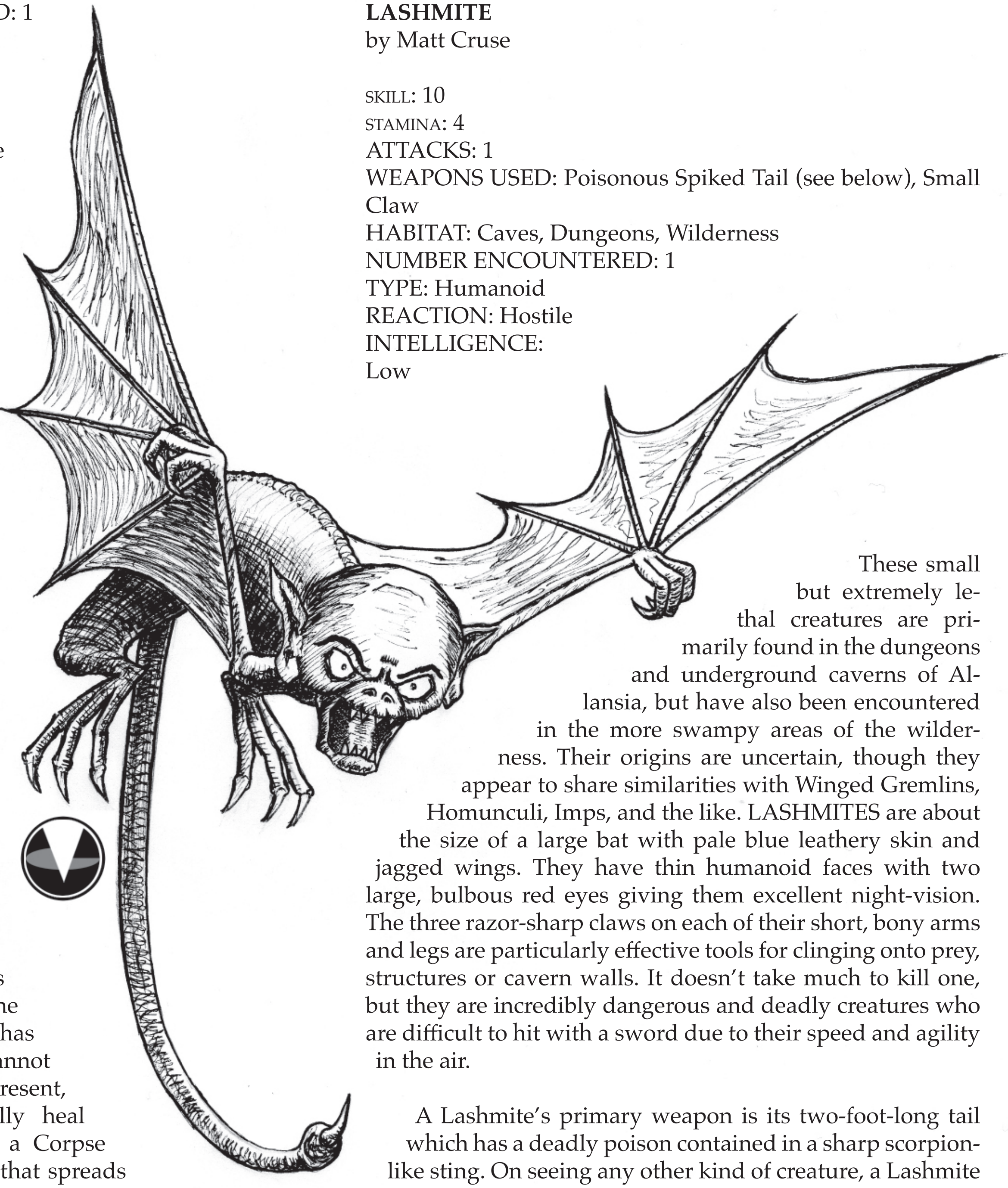
Druids claim them to be children of the Darkthorn. Others say they are evil Tree Men, or servants of the Venom Demon Grathax. Truth is, not much of anything is known about them. What is known is that: when you are travelling through a forest, and you notice an unnatural howl in the wind, the sudden emergence of vermin, and plants withering before your very eyes; you will know the forest is infected by a CORPSE BRAMBLER.

This supernatural being manifests itself deep within a forest where it is concealed amongst the foliage. There it sprouts into a vaguely humanoid shape with bark-like skin, powerful gnarled arms, and a thorny visage both twisted and terrible. Its body disappears into the ground below the waist so once the creature has established its place, it cannot leave. But as long as it is present, the forest cannot naturally heal its wounds. The body of a Corpse Brambler exudes a poison that spreads through the forest's veins causing ongoing contamination until eventually, only a dead forest is left. The process is slow, however, taking several years to reach completion – ample time for a hero to root out the problem.

When threatened, a Corpse Brambler reacts by flailing its long, spiny arms and emitting a nightmarish scream which is disconcerting, but fortunately has no obvious effect. Blunt and pointed weapons are almost useless against it, inflicting 1 point of STAMINA damage less than normal. Only the keen edge of a blade can properly slice through its tough hide. It can also retaliate by summoning brambles or creepers around it to entangle opponents. For every round that passes when fighting a Corpse Brambler, an attacker must reduce his Attack Strength by 1 point. Areas surrounding the creature are usually littered with the remains of previous victims long decomposed to make an excellent fertiliser. If a Corpse Brambler is killed, its body must still be dug out of the ground and burned. Only then can the forest begin to recover.

LASHMITE
by Matt Cruse

SKILL: 10
STAMINA: 4
ATTACKS: 1
WEAPONS USED: Poisonous Spiked Tail (see below), Small Claw
HABITAT: Caves, Dungeons, Wilderness
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1
TYPE: Humanoid
REACTION: Hostile
INTELLIGENCE: Low

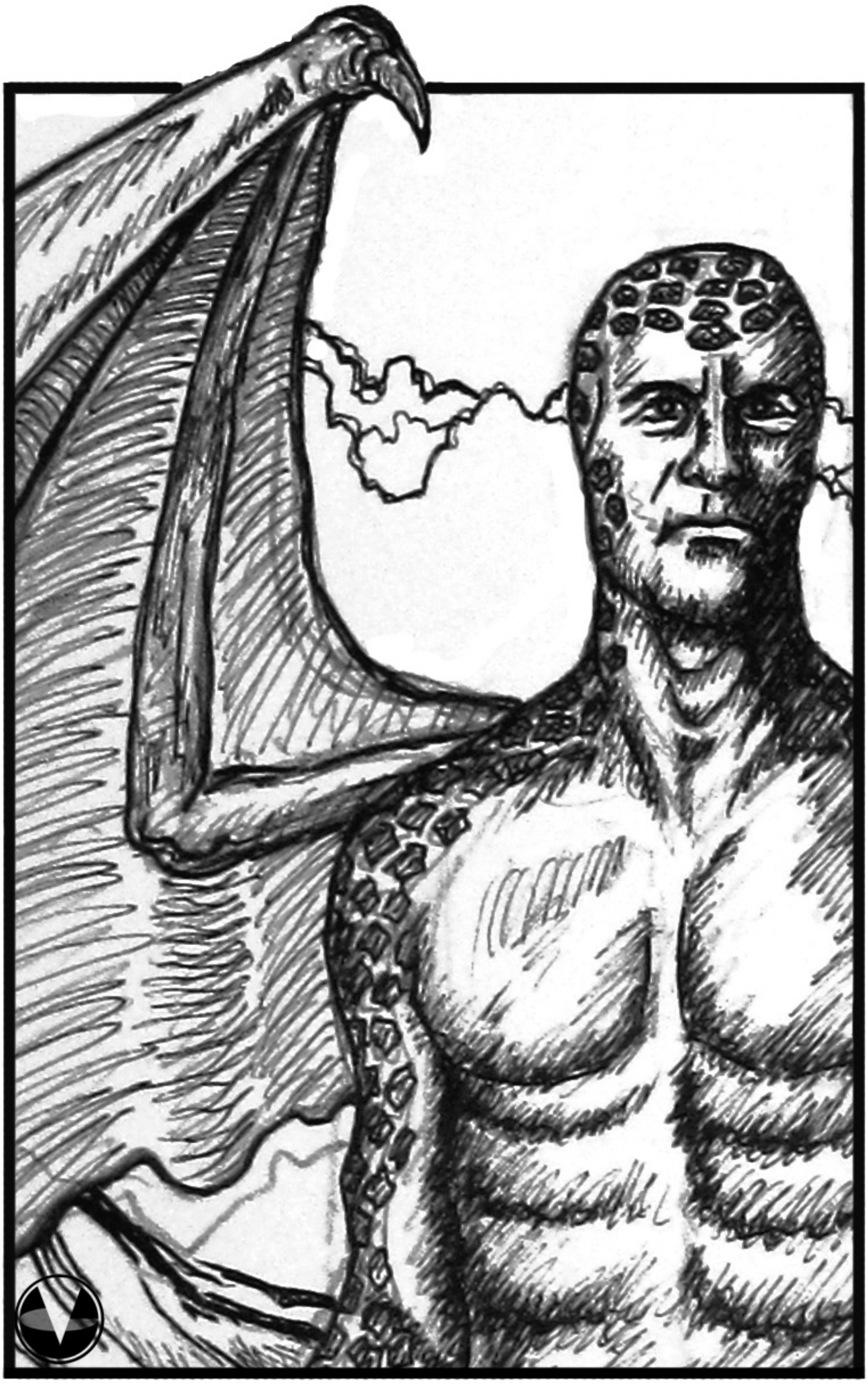


Art: © Victor Cheng, 2010

These small but extremely lethal creatures are primarily found in the dungeons and underground caverns of Allansia, but have also been encountered in the more swampy areas of the wilderness. Their origins are uncertain, though they appear to share similarities with Winged Gremlins, Homunculi, Imps, and the like. LASHMITES are about the size of a large bat with pale blue leathery skin and jagged wings. They have thin humanoid faces with two large, bulbous red eyes giving them excellent night-vision. The three razor-sharp claws on each of their short, bony arms and legs are particularly effective tools for clinging onto prey, structures or cavern walls. It doesn't take much to kill one, but they are incredibly dangerous and deadly creatures who are difficult to hit with a sword due to their speed and agility in the air.

A Lashmite's primary weapon is its two-foot-long tail which has a deadly poison contained in a sharp scorpion-like sting. On seeing any other kind of creature, a Lashmite will dart around its victim attempting to lash it. After a successful hit, a roll of 5 or 6 on one die indicates a hit from its poisoned tail causing 6 points of STAMINA damage, unless its opponent can avoid it by a successful *Test for Luck*. The sharp lash of the tail will otherwise cause 1 point of damage. The effects of the poison can be counteracted by a Healing Potion which, in this case, will only restore the 6 points of STAMINA. Only magic, such as an All Heal spell, will restore STAMINA to its *Initial* level after a serious Lashmite attack .

A skilled adventurer may attempt to even the odds by severing the Lashmite's tail on a favourable Attack Round by *Testing for Skill*. If successful, the Lashmite will continue to fight



using its sharp claws. If unsuccessful, damage is applied as usual and the battle continues with the additional dangers until the next attempt.

MAGON
by Matt Cruse

SKILL:	Adult: 7	Young: 5
STAMINA:	Adult: 9	Young: 6

ATTACKS: 1
WEAPONS USED: Large Claw, Fiery Breath (see below)
HABITAT: Caves, Hills, Mountains, Ruins, Wilderness
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1-2
TYPE: Dragon/Humanoid
REACTION: Unfriendly
INTELLIGENCE: Average-High

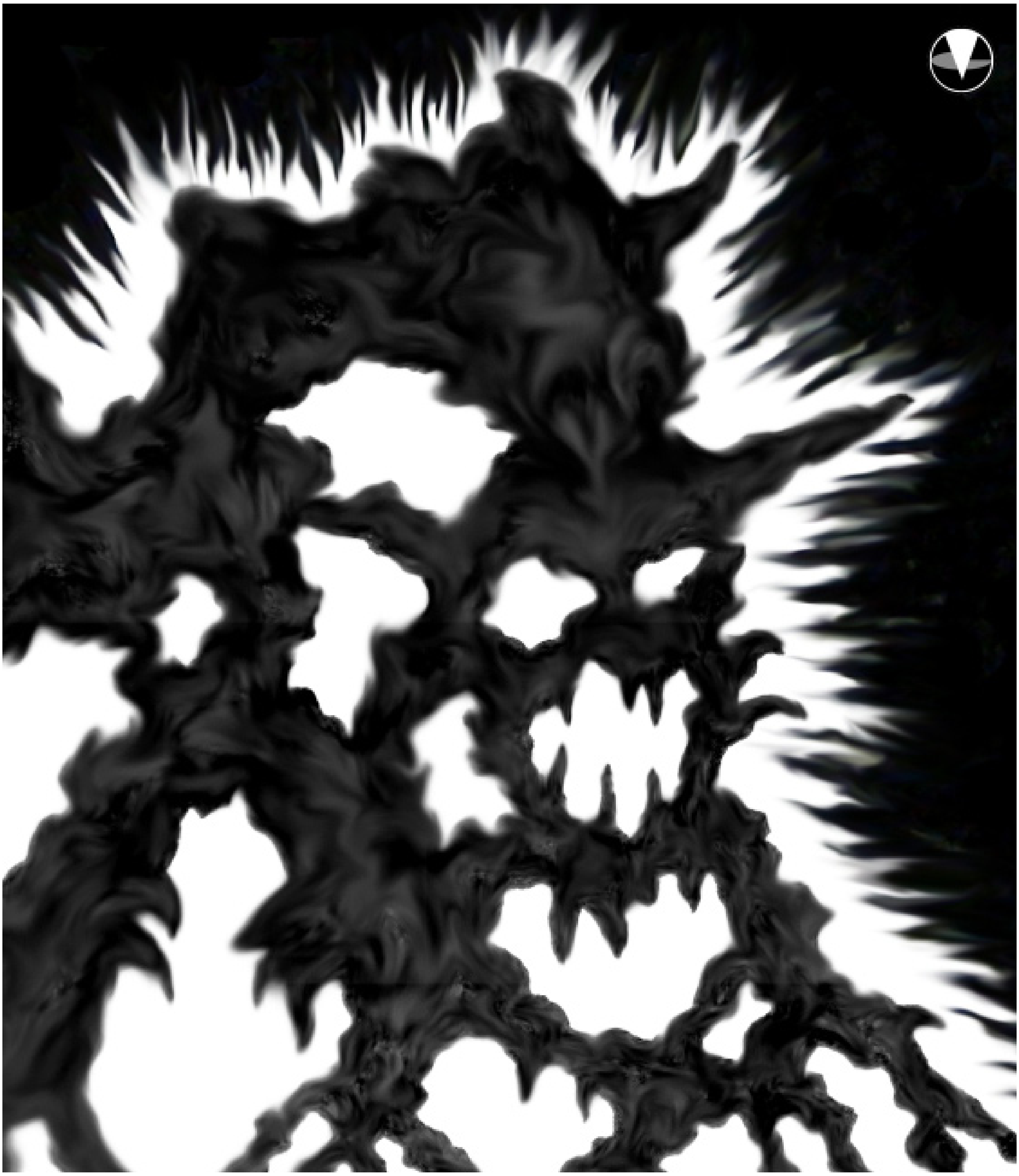
MAGONS are a powerful half-human, half-dragon race of beings. Elven rumours suggest they are the result of a hideous metamorphosis spell cast over a thousand years ago by the powerful archmage Zakomna Rukit after discovering his future bride, the Khulian priestess Gwarthran, with her lover. Wracked by jealousy and revenge, Rukit delved into the forbidden black arts and combined the flesh of a dragon with the blood of a man, cursing the two lovers and banishing them to the wilderness to begin their new lives together. Whether or not this is true, Magons do share characteristics with both Lizardines and Dragonmen (though not Stalkers!), and some sages argue that this implies a Zamarran origin for all three races.

In appearance Magons look primarily human with muscular bodies covered by a tough, leathery green scaly skin. They have bald heads with extremely small ears and large eyes, and spines run down their backs leading to a bone-type spade at the end of a long tail. Their shoulder bones are thick to handle the large muscles which have to lift their weight into the sky with the thrust of a pair of huge wings, though these can take as long as eighteen months to fully develop on their young.

Magons will not necessarily attack on sight unless they feel a potential enemy has invaded their territory. In combat, they use their sharp claws and fiery breath to attack an opponent and have no use for conventional weapons, which may sometimes be found as part of their treasure hoard. They will breathe out a thin stream of fire every Attack Round, as well as attacking with their talons. If the opponent fails to roll their current SKILL or under on two dice, they will be burnt for an additional 2 STAMINA points of damage.

SPIRIT OF DARKNESS
by Matt Cruse

SKILL: See description
STAMINA: See description
ATTACKS: See description
WEAPONS USED: See description
HABITAT: Caves, Dungeons, Forests
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1
TYPE: Demon
REACTION: Unfriendly
INTELLIGENCE: Average



These evil spirits do not have any special strengths as they are not physical beings which exist on the normal plane of reality. SPIRITS OF DARKNESS appear as jet-black shadowy figures about the size of a large man with a distorted, shimmering outline. Essentially they are 'holes' in space and anyone who comes into immediate contact with one will be sucked in and spend the rest of his days on the elemental plane of Evil, otherwise known as the Pit.

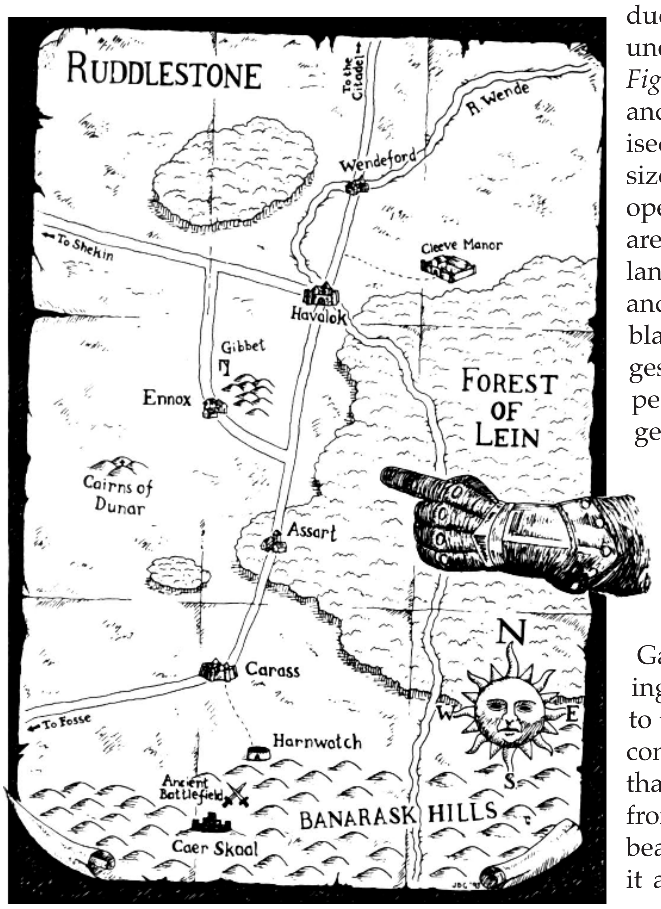
No Spirit of Darkness has the same shape as another, which has led many people to theorise that they are the shadowy extension of something much more physical and gruesome on the other side, possibly fishing for prey. As such, avoidance is the best form of defence, but a Spirit of Darkness will latch like a supernatural leech onto anyone who gets within six feet of one, treating them to a sudden and extreme intolerance to light for as long as they remain together. As they are nonphysical entities, these creatures cannot be destroyed by conventional means, but can be disposed of by fire. Casting a HOT spell is particularly useful in these situations as the fireball can be thrown directly into the entity. When this is done, a loud, ear-piercing wail will be heard as if coming from the spirit itself before it is finally sucked into oblivion.

The unwary traveller unaccustomed in the ways of magic who is unfortunate enough to stumble across a Spirit of Darkness in the pitch blackness of a cave or dungeon does at least have the luxury of two options: look forward to the madness that will ultimately ensue from the curse that is attached to them, or pray for a quick death and take a leap of faith into the darkness. FF

MAPS IN FOCUS

In a follow-up to the question of the placement of Gundobad within the maps of Titan from the previous issue, **Simon Osborne** takes a look through the various whole or part-maps presented of the *Fighting Fantasy* world and how the world of Titan was, somewhat haphazardly, put together by a variety of different hands.

It's a well known saying that "a picture speaks a thousand words." Both the cover artwork and the interior illustrations for the *Fighting Fantasy* series undoubtedly had a major impact on the success of the series. Who can forget Russ Nicholson's gruesome Ghoul from *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, or the Shape Changer from the cover of the original Puffin edition of *The Forest of Doom*? For some of us, though, illustrations of the terrifying creatures and ghoulish characters of the world of Titan must take second place to the most important illustrations of all – the maps!



Map: © Jonathan Green, 2010. Used with permission.

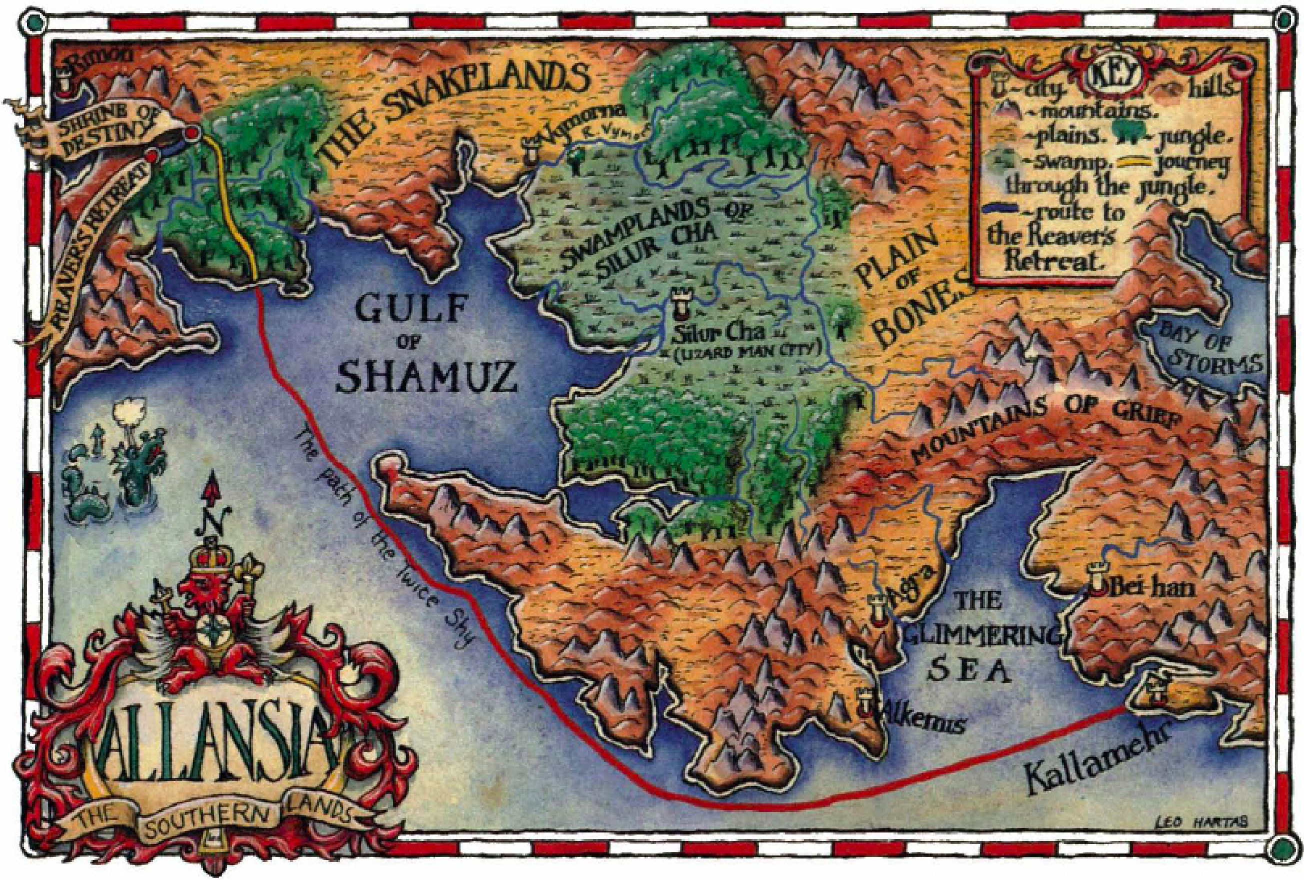
A good map shows what is likely to be encountered during an adventure without giving away too much of the plot. It shows clearly the relationship between places, the types of terrain that might be encountered, perhaps even where certain characters live. Whichever way you look at it, a map speaks far more words about the world of Titan than any normal picture ever could.

The earliest map in the series can be found in Ian Livingstone's *The Forest of Doom* from 1983. Malcolm Barter's illustration is deliberately incomplete and leaves lots of mystery. The second is Iain McCaig's illustration of Fire Island for *Island of the Lizard King* (1984). These first two cartographic attempts may look a little rough and ready to the more discerning connoisseur of the adventure gamebook idiom, but it is worth remembering that the existence of the continent of Allansia wasn't announced until the publication of *Warlock* #1 in 1984, after *Island of the Lizard King*. Until then, the authors had been making things up as they went along, without any geographical framework. The announcement about Allansia was accompanied by the first ever map of Allansia, drawn by Maggie Kneen, at the time an archaeological artist. It shows all the major locations of the first seven books (excepting, of course, *Starship Traveller*), and they dovetail together very nicely. The accompanying text on the map describes the plots of the six fantasy-themed adventures published up to that time, whetting the appetite of any novice adventurer.

Of course, John Blanche's wonderfully strange and atmospheric map of Kakhabad, surrounded by strange and hideous creatures, appeared prior to this in late 1983 with the publication of the first of Steve Jackson's *Sorcery!* series, *The Shamutanti Hills*. Although ultimately setting the trend for later books, it was some time before maps became a typical part of the series. Indeed, it was not until the sixteenth *Fighting Fantasy* title that another map appeared – Andrew Chapman's *Seas of Blood* (1985). Unlike the previous two maps in the official series, the area of the Inland Sea is there shown in some detail, though without any artistic embellishment. The same year saw two large maps published, one of Kakhabad and the other of "Allansia" (at least, the north-western corner of it) in the book *Out of the Pit*. These two maps were produced by Dave Andrews, the first unofficial head cartographer of the *Fighting Fantasy* world. His black-and-white maps contain much stylised calligraphic lettering of varying sizes, as well as showing the vast open nature of the world, with wide areas of apparently-empty plainsland between the mountains, towns and the coast. He manages to fill this blank space well by lines of ink, suggesting empty grassland, seemingly peaceful, but clearly filled with dangerous denizens of the night!

In the same year, Steve Jackson published his headache-inducing fantasy questbook *The Tasks of Tantalon*, which contained several maps of a new country called Gallantaria. Stephen Lavis' drawing style is quite busy, but this adds to the mystery of the maps the book contained. His map of Gallantaria that was reproduced on the inside front and rear covers of the book is beautifully drawn in pencil, lending it an air of mystique and antiquity. The book contains several references to Jackson's earlier *Sorcery*! series, which he had completed with *The Crown of Kings* earlier in the year, indicating that Kakhabad and Gallantaria co-existed on a larger landmass.

The following year, 1986, was a watershed in the history of *Fighting Fantasy*, for it was when the existence of the whole world of Titan was officially announced, bringing together the geography of all the fantasy-themed *Fighting Fantasy* books published between 1982 and 1986 – save for *Talisman of*



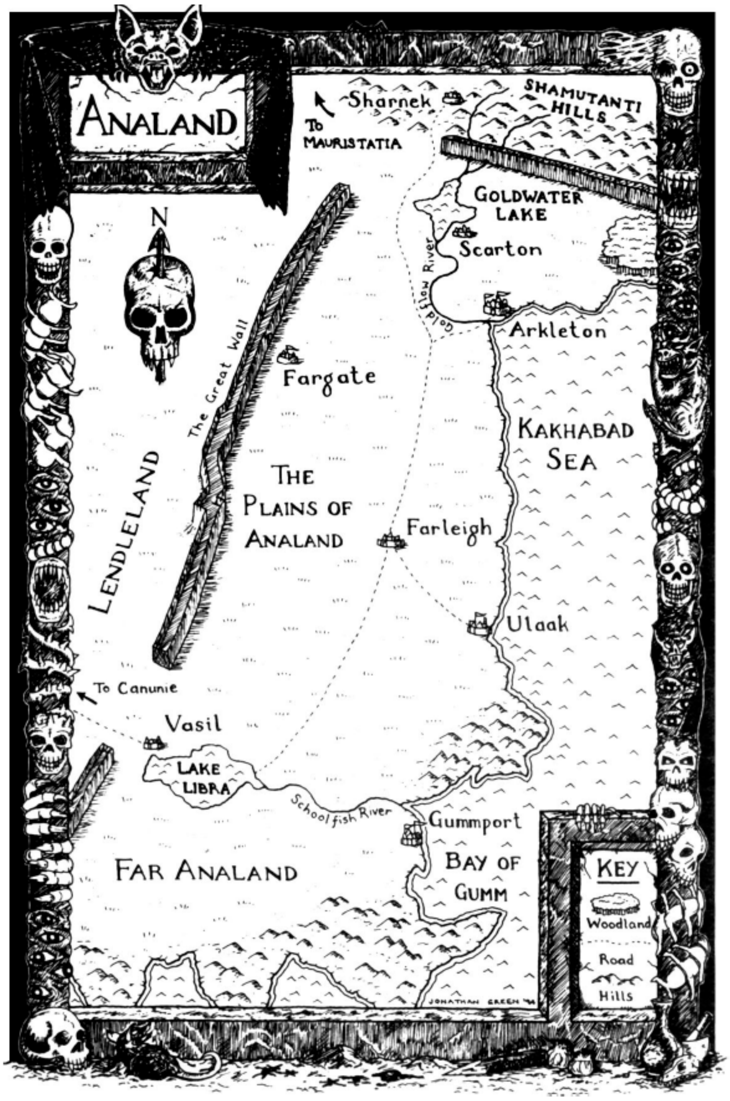
Map: © Leo Hartas, 2010. Used with permission.

Death, which was set on Jamie Thomson's own fantasy world of Orb. Finally, with the publication of the book *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*, the geography of all three continents, as well as the major island archipelagos, was mapped in all their tarnished splendour. The book was positively brimming with maps and charts, mostly drawn by the newly-appointed unofficial head cartographer Steve Luxton, who had taken over from Dave Andrews, possibly because the latter was busy working on *The Warlock of Firetop Mountai*n boardgame and maps for the twenty-third and twenty-fourth Fighting Fantasy gamebooks at the time. Luxton's black-and-white style is appreciably different to Andrews', with printed labels rather than hand drawn calligraphic text, and the surrounding faux-scrollwork replaced with harsh, angled lines, as though the illustration has been hacked from a preexisting vellum codex with a machete. What his cartography perhaps lacks in embellishment it makes up for in accuracy, and although his style is at odds with the former cartographers of Titan, it does not detract from the overall canon in any way; rather, it sets up a deliberate and distinct style from which *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* definitely benefited.

Apparently in response to the success of Joe Dever's *Lone Wolf* series of gamebooks (1984–98), most of which contained a full-colour two-page map, the *Fighting Fantasy* series also began to incorporate colour maps on the inside covers of the Puffin editions. The first of these was found on the inside cover of Robin Waterfield's *Masks of Mayhem* in 1986. Between the release of this twenty-third *Fighting Fantasy* adventure and the forty-sixth, all but four of the Titan-based gamebooks contained a full-colour map on the inside cover. The books that lacked a full-colour map were *Beneath Nightmare Castle* (1987), though this did contain a small map of the town of Neuburg; the esoteric *Phantoms of Fear* (1987); *Slaves of the Abyss* (1988), which instead contained a colour illustration of an hourglass and an image of the razed city of Kallamehr; and *Spectral Stalkers* (1991) which contained a colour illustration of the rock engraved with a verse outside the maze of Semeion the Seer. *Master of Chaos* (1990) contained a colour map of the city of Ashkyos, though it is missing from the first impression (ISBN 0-14-034010-6). Also containing a colour map were the related titles *The Riddling Reaver* (1986) and the two-volume multi-player *Clash of the Princes* (both 1986). From mid-1991, the publishers dispensed with the colour maps in favour of black-and-white maps in most of the subsequent titles.

Although John Blanche had produced a colour map of Kakhabad for the *Sorcery!* boxed set, Titan's first real colour cartographer was Dave Andrews, who had previously been Titan's unofficial head cartographer. His colour cartography first appeared in *Masks of Mayhem*, covering the area of the Affen Forest, Lake Nekros and Pikestaff Plain to the north of the city of Arion in Khul. It is perhaps not the most exciting of maps, and according to one commentator, the book seems to cover "perhaps the emptiest region of Khul (if the supplied map is anything to go by)." He also produced the much more interesting colour map for the following book, *Creature of Havoc* (1986). His cartography for *Clash of the Princes*, published the same year, is typically busy and full of atmosphere.

The following year was the start of Leo Hartas' dominance as Titan's premier mapmaker. Between 1987 and 1991 he produced no less than twelve colour maps for the *Fighting Fantasy* series, the other four being produced by Steve Luxton. Hartas' first piece of colour cartography for the series actually appeared in the previous year's *The Riddling Reaver* for authors Paul Mason and Steve Williams. According to Paul Mason: "One of the best map drawers I know of is Leo Hartas. I first encountered him when Ian Marsh got him in to do a map for a *White Dwarf* scenario, and what we got back was stunning: rather than merely being a representation of an area, it was a fascinating piece of art in its own right." Hartas'



Map: © Jonathan Green, 2010. Used with permission.

vibrant style, complete with little touches and intriguing detail, certainly complements the adventures well, and it is easy to see why he became the main cartographer-of-choice for the series. Steve Luxton's colour maps are also well drawn, his eerie representation of the blighted, vampire-infested principality of Mortvania for *Vault of the Vampire* (1988) being particularly atmospheric. As the publishers looked to cut costs, however, the cartography became 'just another illustration', though Leo Hartas continued to provide many of these, including the ones for *Siege of Sardath* and *Return to Firetop Mountain* (both 1992). His most recent cartography for the world of Titan appeared in 1994 in the book *Allansia* and also in *Skullcrag*, the third of *The Zagor Chronicles* novels.

The most recent alumni of Titan cartography is not an illustrator at all. Jonathan Green, author of five *Fighting Fantasy* books, with a seventh one to be published in 2010, drew maps for three of his adventures and also for Keith Martin's *Revenge of the Vampire* (1995). His style is very clean, with no unnecessary detail, but the maps contain enough style and embellishment to elevate them above being merely rough sketches. Neither of his most recent books contain maps, though both are brimming full of geographical references in the text.

When the series was resurrected in 2003 by Wizard Books, an odd decision was made by the editorial staff to drop the colour maps from their republished editions. Thus, *Creature of Havoc*, *Crypt of the Sorcerer* and *Armies of Death* were all reprinted sans the colour map that originally accompanied them. The reprinted series did prove popular, however, and this led Myriador, "a group of experienced role-play fanatics based in England who thought it would be cool to earn a living through the hobby we love", to gain a license to adapt some of the reprinted gamebooks as role-playing modules, using the OGL that accompanied the 3rd Edition *Dungeons & Dragons* rules, otherwise known as the d20 System. These contained new maps created using computer software, giving them a distinctive look. The accuracy of a number of these maps has been called into question when compared to the text of the books, but nevertheless they add a certain level of detail to areas not otherwise covered by preexisting Titan cartography.

Throughout the series, the cartography of the world of Titan is decidedly varied in style, quality, even accuracy. Some maps show certain features, that are missing from other maps covering a similar area. Certain cities seems to 'walk' across maps, for example the city of Fang, which moves seemingly hundreds of miles to the east or west depending on which map you look at. Coastlines alter dramatically depending on the cartographer.

An example of this can be seen on the map of Khul on page 23 of *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*. It shows the Foulbrood River flowing north-east to south-west through Scorpion Swamp, which is shown to be a vast area of marshland that would take many days' travel to cross. Interesting, then, that according to *Scorpion Swamp* (1984), the Foulbrood River flows downstream to the east, and the swamp can be crossed in just one day. Another problem with the same map is the confusion between the Hiang-Kiang and Hang-Yo rivers. According to the Titan map, these two rivers are the same; however, according to *Sword of the Samurai* (1986), the Hiang-King flows from west to east past the northern eaves of the Forest of Shadows, where it is crossed by Hagakure Bridge. It then flows due east, forming a delta in the coastal Mizokumo Fens. This delta is not present, nor are the fens shown to be coastal. Instead, the river swings around to the south-east, crossing what should be the "plain of the great Hang-Yo River." The colour map accompanying Graeme Davis' *Midnight Rogue* (1987) has fifteen numerically-marked locations, but lacks any accompanying key to describe what these locations are supposed to be.

Of course, it was not just Steve Luxton who made such cartographical clangers. In his map for *The Trolltooth Wars* (1989), Leo Hartas has labelled Balthus Dire's home as 'Blacktower', and the outflow of the Catfish River through Port Blacksand has been named 'Oyster Bay' – which is actually a small village on the Southern Plains where the Whitewater River flows out into the ocean. The map found in *Dungeoneer* (1989) contains several errors, including having the village of Mirewater placed over a hundred miles too far to the west, and incorrectly to the south of the Catfish River, and having Kaad being mislabelled 'Kaan'.

Of course, the authors and editors should also be held responsible for map-making mistakes, rather than placing all the blame on the artists and illustrators. Despite these discrepancies, the myriad maps can generally by reconciled, giving a much clearer, more detailed picture of the amazing world of Titan. **FF**

> **“The Watchmen were professionally trained soldiers, but they stood little chance against the savagery of the Lizard Men.”**

Somewhere in the dense, impassive and yet unnervingly menacing Arantis jungle foliage that surrounded the bedraggled trio there sounded the mating call of an exotic bird. The shrill cry rose defiantly above the incessant insect buzzing for a few heartbeats before the unrelenting drone that filled the jungle air assailed their ears once again.

‘A red-tailed Waqu,’ murmured Dawnbreaker the Ranger. ‘A fortuitous omen methinks. Our fortunes are improving by the grace of Zaragillia.’

‘How so, Ranger?’ The question came from the parched lips of Juno Calvé, ex-priestess of Galana.

‘If we were being followed the Waqu would not sing for the Lizard Men.’

‘Then truly Zaragillia watches over us,’ the third of the trio, Enoch Reed a Spice Merchant by trade, said to himself.

‘From those green scaled demons, aye, Spicer,’ Dawnbreaker agreed. ‘The jungle has many dangers to ensnare us yet.’ He continued in the same breath. ‘If I had I not told you to dowse your skin with the juice of the Gaborberry you would have long since been bitten to death by the offspring of Hmurresh.’

Their exposed skin no doubt stank to the heights of the Celestial Court but none of them has suffered a single bite and all three were walking in sturdy boots taken from the bodies of slain Watchmen of the doomed Caravan they had all been part of three days earlier. Dawnbreaker had insisted that the boots were necessary despite cumbersome feel otherwise they might get swamp rot and either lose their feet or their life from the deadly affliction. The Ranger was the Caravan’s guide and his authority on the jungle was without question. Calvé and Reed had obeyed him without hesitation.

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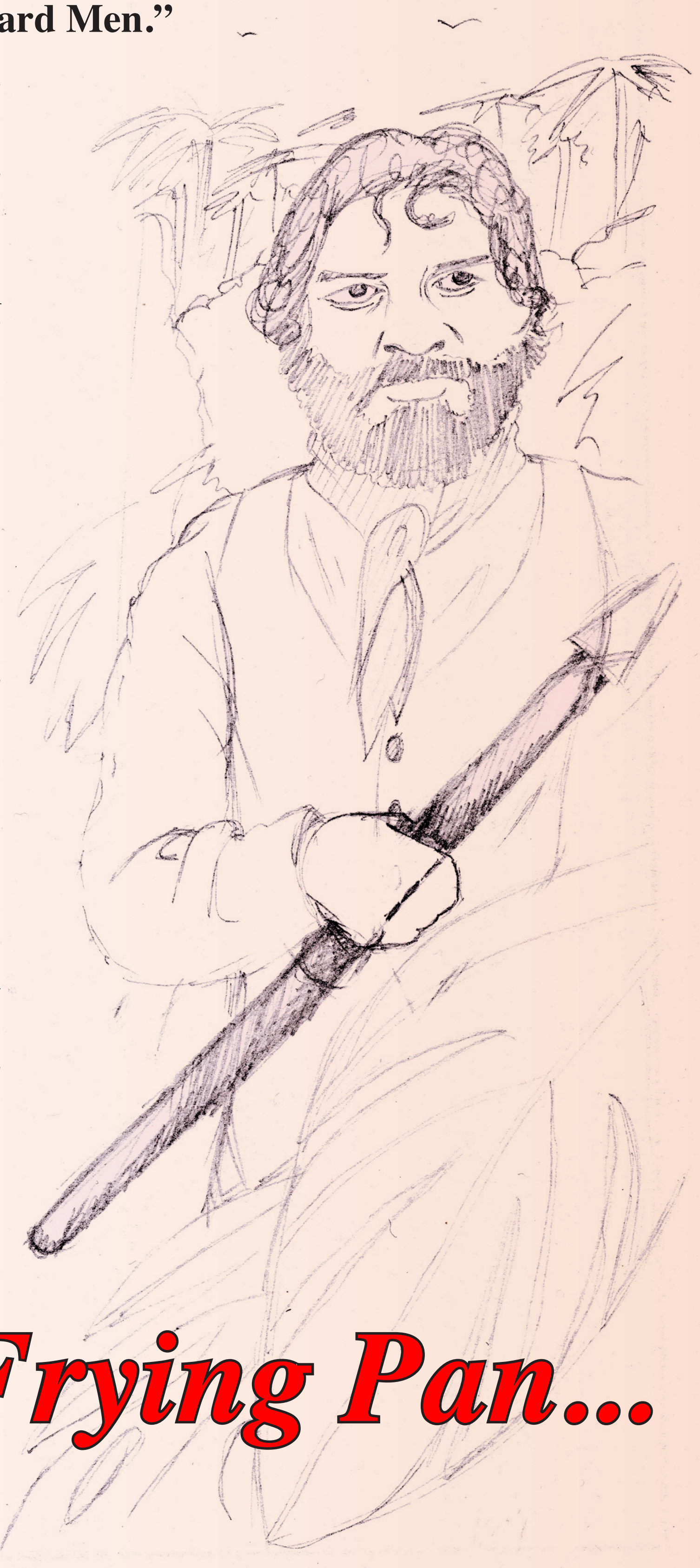

Art: © Alexander Ballingall, 2010

Out of the Frying Pan...

by Ian Brocklehurst

The Caravan had been on the return leg from the walled town of Al-Karva to Kaynlesh-Ma when the Lizard Men had ambushed it. Twelve traders including Reed, thirty Watchmen, two dozen civilian travellers and Dawnbreaker, Calvé had served Galana for seven years and was one of the civilians travelling with Ben Kameen the man to whom she had been betrothed to at 13 prior to her calling to the Al-Karva Temple.

Ten days out of Al-Karva the spawn of Suthis Cha had struck without warning.

The question as to why there was a Lizard Man War Band so far west of the Siege of Vymorna was the least of the Watchmen's worries as they struggled to defend the Caravan. The Watchmen were professionally trained soldiers, but they stood little chance against the savagery of the Lizard Men. The reptilian attackers butchered the men and dragged female travellers away screaming to a fate worse than death. Calvé had seen Kameen cleaved in-two by a double-headed axe and was saved from a similar fate by Reed who buried his grandfather's prized sword deep into the brute's gut causing it to howl in agony allowing the two to flee for cover in the jungle undergrowth. Moments later they were joined by half a dozen Watchmen and Dawnbreaker.

Dawnbreaker immediately took command of the group and on showing them that he had picked up a sack full of water bottles along with a coil of rope over his shoulder he ordered the survivors to flee into the jungle. The nightmarish sounds of the ambush faded into the distance as the group headed deeper into the tropical forest, but they were not alone. No more than three hours after leaving the Caravan some pursuing Lizard Men caught up with the survivors as they rested momentarily by the edge of a small lake. Three Lizard Men attacked the group, a small number but their advantage was their weapons were coated in some terrible poison and the remaining Watchmen succumbed to their injuries no matter how minor. Dawnbreaker remained unscathed and was able to slay the dreaded reptilians before ordering Calvé and Reed to take the boots off the dead men and follow him into the depths of the Arantis jungle. Reed had pulled a spear from the belly of a dead Lizard Man since his sword had been left in the gut of the beast that would have slain Calvé.

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The Waqu bird sang again and Calvé looked to Reed. 'Our Ranger knows the jungle well. We would wise to listen to him. He has not failed us yet.'

Reed nodded in agreement and looked ahead to their fully clothed guide. Whereas he and Calvé had torn their robes down until in both of their cases only their respective modesty was covered Dawnbreaker had lost nothing but a chainmail coat which he had discarded during the initial ambush. 'How far from civilization do you think we are, Ranger?'

'Five to six days.'

"'I know of no villages or towns in the middle of this cursed jungle.' Calvé looked to Reed to see his eyes flash in agreement with her statement."

'Can we survive this place that long?'

'I can,' replied Dawnbreaker softly. 'You too on the other hand will be stood by the Scales of Libra before the fifth day which is why I'm taking you to a safe haven I know of in these parts.'

'I know of no villages or towns in the middle of this cursed jungle.' Calvé looked to Reed to see his eyes flash in agreement with her statement.

'There is no settlement like that in these parts, my Lady. You are quite right,' confirmed Dawnbreaker. 'We are making for a bandit camp.'

Both Calvé and Reed stopped trudging through the slimy undergrowth and exclaimed in unison. 'Bandits!'

The Ranger stopped and turned to face them. 'There is nothing to fear. They are bandits because they are prone to steal from Caravans such as the one we belonged to but they rarely seriously harm anyone in their robberies. They live out here away from... civilization and its rules.'

'They have women-folk, then?' There was a note of concern in Calvé's voice.

Dawnbreaker nodded. 'Your honour will remain quite safe, my Lady. As will your well-being Spicer so long as you don't judge them according to your way of life.'

Reed tapped the spear's butt on the ground as a sign of acknowledgement and the trio continued on their way.

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They had been travelling for several hours when Dawnbreaker suddenly raised a hand above his head indicating they immediately stop. Calvé and Reed obeyed and crouched low as Dawnbreaker squatted down onto his haunches and withdrew his sword instinctively. He cast the rucksack of water bottles aside and with a shrug of his mighty frame the coil of rope slipped to the ground effortlessly.

'Ranger?' Calvé whispered as quietly as she dared.

Dawnbreaker turned his head to the left and spoke softly over his shoulder. 'We're about to be attacked.' As he spoke his left hand threw a wickedly large dagger at Calvé. 'Not by Lizard Men, my Lady.'

'Bandits?' Queried Reed.

'No, Spicer.'

From sides came a terrible wailing sound as dozens of voices called out a battle cry.

'Uggluk-jai,' continued Dawnbreaker as rose to meet the incoming enemy. 'Marsh Goblins.'

The Ranger's right arm swung with majestic precision to make contact with a charging Marsh Goblin. The blade struck the armoured Goblin head on and split him in two. Goblin blood splattered the following Uggluk-jai blinding them for long enough to allow Dawnbreaker to eviscerate them. The Arantis undergrowth had exploded with attacking Marsh Goblins. Scores of them poured out of the dense foliage to assault the three humans. Reed and Calvé stood with their backs to each other trying to stop the Uggluk-jai from landing a blow on them while Dawnbreaker appeared to dance around the frail humans endlessly swinging his sword or using his feet to kick-away the four-foot tall foe.

‘Leave us be,’ screamed Calvé as her dagger sunk into the face of a particularly ugly goblin. As she withdrew the blade a stream of Goblin squirted into her face and as the Uggluk-jai collapsed clutching his face to the ground, Calvé’s nerve broke and she suddenly ran screaming into the direction that they come from.

‘Juno,’ cried Reed as he realized his rear was now exposed to attack. Using the spear like a quarter-staff he tried to keep the attacking Marsh Goblins at bay as his strength started to fail him.

“‘It’s too late for me, Ranger.’ As he smiled blood trickled out of his mouth. ‘You must rescue Juno though. What will they do to her?’”

Dawnbreaker said nothing as he glanced quickly in the direction of the departing ex-priestess. His temper was further fuelled and the constant stroke of his sword felled more of the marauding Goblins onto the blood soaked jungle ground. His left hand grabbed an Uggluk-jai, who had been cursing him blindly in broken Arantisian, by the throat and with a mighty squeeze as he raised the creature up into the air the Ranger tore out the Goblin’s windpipe and sent the body sailing into the undergrowth from whence it had come from.

Before his sword could land another strike a single blow on a horn sounded and the Marsh Goblins disengaged and blended back into the jungle growth as if they had never been there. Only the corpses and pathetic meanings of the seriously injured could attest to the recent battle. Dawnbreaker buried his sword into the chest of one of the moaning Goblins silencing it as he turned to look for Reed.

The Spice Merchant was slumped to the ground on his knees barely holding himself up with the spear. The Ranger sheathed his sword and helped Reed onto his back. From the Merchant’s stomach flowed a steady torrent of blood. The Merchant’s pale face gazed vacantly at Dawnbreaker.

‘It’s too late for me, Ranger.’ As he smiled blood trickled out of his mouth. ‘You must rescue Juno though. What will they do to her?’

Dawnbreaker glanced in the direction Calvé had fled. ‘Eat her I expect.’ He turned back to Reed realizing he should say something more reassuring but the Merchant had already died.

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Calvé raced through the undergrowth as fast as her worn legs would carry her. She had veered from the path that the Ranger had brought them along and was now plunging deep into untravelled parts of the jungle. She felt certain she was being followed and was determined not to stop until her body collapsed from exhaustion. It was as she was thinking about what the Goblins might do to her if they caught her when tripped and fell onto a blanket of purple roots in front a of a huge plant. Calvé had barley time to catch her breath when she screamed as a thick tendril suddenly enveloped her slender figure and she found herself being raised into the air.

Seconds later the tendril released her and with a shrill cry she found herself landing in a bowl of water about two feet deep. As she got to her feet and looked around she realized she was inside a plant. A plant in which the sides she could see were covered in sharp spines pointing downwards. Her head gazed up to the sunlit hole above. She was inside the plant and wouldn’t be able to climb out. The spines were too sharp and her naked flesh would be torn to shreds.

‘Help,’ she screamed. ‘‘Help. I’m in here.’ If the Marsh Goblins were nearby then maybe they would get her out. Maybe she could escape them if she waited for the right opportunity. It was then that she noticed the plant was secreting liquid that was flowing down the sides and into the puddle of water she stood in. The water was starting to boil. The full horror of the situation she was suddenly in dawned on her. The plant was eating her. She screamed in sheer futility.

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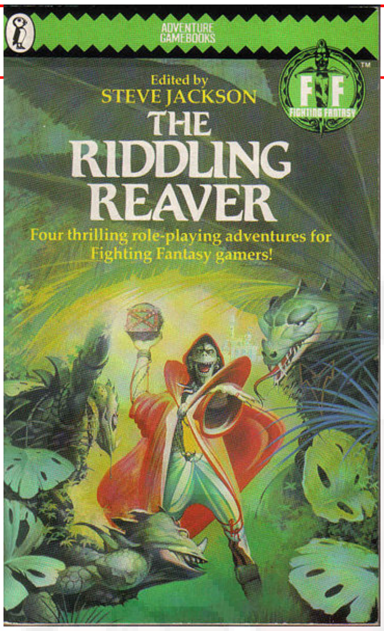
The Ranger entered the Bandit Camp the next day and surveyed the carnage he found there. The carrion eaters of the jungle had been at work for several days and the stench alone had forced Dawnbreaker to tear some cloth from his shirt and cover his nose and mouth. Men, women and children had all been slaughtered. From the looks of it they had been executed by being disembowelled and left for the ants to consume them alive. He shook his head as he gazed in disbelief at the butchery before him. What manner of being could carry out such an atrocity the likes of which Titan had never seen? As if to answer his thoughts there came a rustle from the undergrowth to the right of him and as the Ranger immediately sensed danger his sword was instinctively unsheathed and he readied himself to meet the unknown foe... **FF**

SPOILER WARNING: Plot spoilers for *The Riddling Reaver*!

Ever sat and stared at your copies of the original *Fighting Fantasy* RPG books or the later *AFF* editions? Ever wondered what it might be like to actually get a group of friends together to play such adventures? **Adrian Young** presents an actual account of just such a *Fighting Fantasy* RPG campaign, featuring real Player Characters and outcomes from an adventure played over six four-hour sessions.

It all began in the Month of Dark, in the 274th Year AC (after Chaos), the Year of the Tiger. Five individuals had gathered in the south-eastern city-port of Kallamehr to form an adventuring party. Each had their own reasons for wanting to traverse the savage continent that was Allansia, but all were united in one respect. A growing evil was spreading, and it was once again the time for heroes.



CHRONICLE OF HEROES:

The Riddling Reaver

MAYBE YOU'VE HEARD OF ME?

Lady Carolina Bluestone of Kallamehr had sent word to her second cousin Sir Marcellos of Bei-Han to attend the city-port. The invitation stressed urgency and secrecy, so Marcellos suspected trouble. The twenty-six year old Human fighter was a descendant of the noble house of Rangor to which Lady Carolina also belonged. Marcellos was ambitious and proud, and had dreams that one day his name would be known across Allansia. By the time he arrived in Kallamehr, Marcellos had been joined by four other budding adventurers.

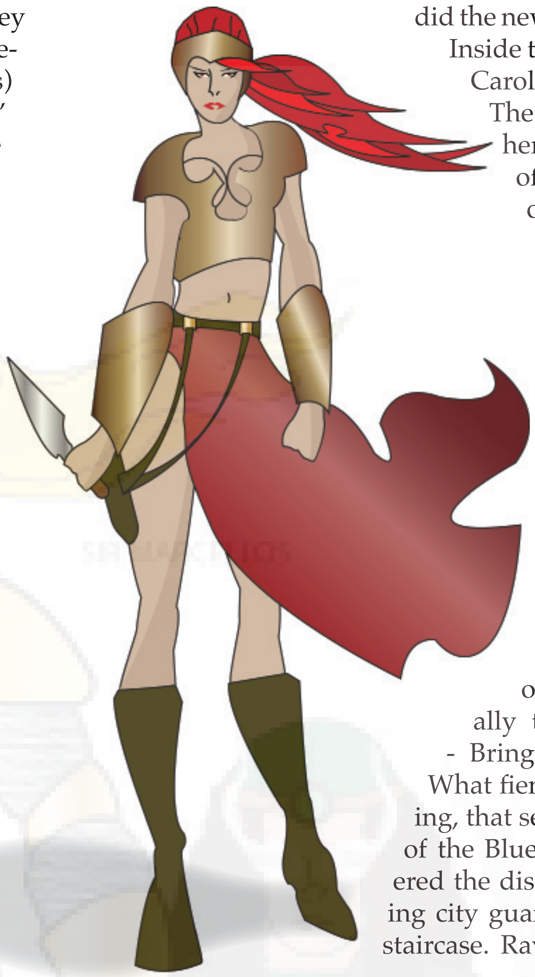
There was Tetra. A thirty-seven year old Human fighter who had travelled extensively around the south-eastern area of Allansia. The raven haired Tetra made her keep by protecting local merchants who caravanned between the outer villages and towns. She was as tough as they came, and liked nothing more than the thrill of the melee. Tetra chanced upon Marcellos at a country inn called *The Drowning Swan*, and agreed to join him to Kallamehr. She also recommended stopping by a small outlaying settlement to pick up her friend, El Ravell.

The bald and pale-faced El Ravell grew up as an orphan after he witnessed his family massacred by a marauding necromancer. Found amongst the blood and carnage by a nomadic Human tribe, Ravell became a doughty warrior, and taught to fight without mercy. Now twenty-seven years of age, and known to his friends as Rav, he still hides his ghostly white appearance under a full helmet. Only Tetra knows the horror of that tale, and to this day, Rav has a distrust of magic, and a preference for the surety of steel.

Together, the three fighters met the female Human spellcaster Herme, who had planned to travel Allansia aboard one of the many merchant ships that frequented the Port of Kallamehr. Herme was already relatively well known in the area, having already completed two notable adventures – The Wishing Well and The Hives of Peril. She met the other three adventurers as they camped for the night, and aside from Ravell, they were more than happy to have a magic user travel with them.

Art: © Nathan Stones, 2010

Finally, less than a league from Kallamehr, they happened upon the mysterious Shadow. A ninety-six year old (twenty four in Human years) Elven ranger armed with a unusual "crescent" spear. But it was not his spear that caught the party's eye. Shadow's face was totally embellished with obscure black and green reptilian tattooing. Shadow claimed to belong to a secretive Elven cult from the remote Silur Cha region, and also told of the time spent as a prisoner in the evil catacombs of the Caarth! Indeed, many of the Elf's tales raised a brow, but in any case, he too was an adventurer – looking for adventure – and as Rav put it, it was better to have him as an ally than an adversary.



The Human fighter Tetra and on the opposite page the Human fighter Sir Marcellos of Bei-Han

The party had been formed.

With the cool Glimmering Sea breeze behind them, the newly formed adventuring party – Marcellos, Ravell, Tetra, Shadow and Herme – walked through Kallamehr's open gates. Marcellos, who had frequented the port on numerous occasions, realised something was amiss. The normally bustling market streets were deserted and a great din could be heard from the Rangor Tower on the other side of the city. Marcellos and Ravell, being poor in pocket, rich in dreams, and quick off the mark, helped themselves to some scraps of armour from the unattended blacksmith workshop. Meanwhile Shadow, Herme and Tetra raced to the tower. The ivy covered Rangor Tower was the home of Baron Bluestone and his wife Lady Carolina. It seemed like the whole city had populated the market square to gaze up upon the tower. For on its turret, at its highest point, the Baron himself was perched perilously close to the edge of a fatal precipice. A dark figure with a flowing deep green cape, advanced slowly but menacingly towards him.

The Kallamehr city guards tried desperately to get to their Baron's aid, but their might was insufficient to penetrate the huge bolted doored entrance at the base of the tower. Shadow reacted first. Use to operating alone, the Elf darted through the chaotic crowd and past the guards and climbed the thick sprawling vines of the Tower. Rather than continue to the turret, he scaled up to an arched window on the first floor and bravely entered. There he found the old wizard Hammet the Dash, loyal advisor to the Rangor House, slumped on a sofa – throat slit. Accustomed to the grisly sight of death, Shadow grasped the ornate box Hammet was clutching, and bound up the stairs, onward and upward, to the top of the tower.

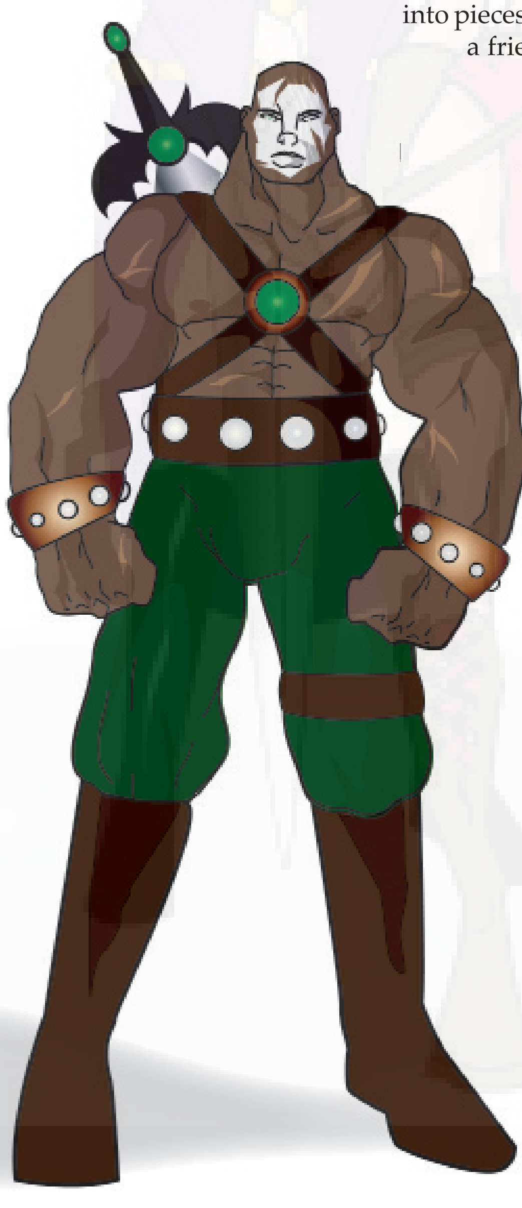
Meanwhile, in the bustling street below, Tetra tried to explain their presence to the angry guards. With Tetra's diplomacy succeeding as more of a distraction than influential, Herme cast a *Locks* spell and burst the Tower doors open. Before the guards could organise themselves, Tetra quickly followed, as did the newly equipped Rav and Marcellos. Inside the ground floor they found Lady Carolina bound to a seat and gagged. The heroes' entry made her jolt in her seat, causing a sealed glass jar of black spiders perched on top of her head to topple to the slate tiles. Herme launched herself across the floor and succeeded in a desperate dive to catch the jar, preventing it from smashing and releasing its arachnoid contents. As Marcellos fished around the finely furnished room collecting whatever he could carry, Tetra and Rav untied Lady Carolina and listened intently to Lady Carolina's account. She explained how her husband the Baron had befriended a seer as an advisor, only to discover that he was actually the legendary Riddling Reaver - Bringer of Chaos through the ages. What fiendish plot was the Reaver hatching, that seemed to involve the elimination of the Bluestones of Kallamehr! Tetra ushered the distraught baroness into the awaiting city guard escort, before moving up the staircase. Rav and Marcellos joined her, but they were already one step behind Shadow and Herme in their attempt to rescue the Baron from the Reaver's clutches.

Shadow had nearly made it to the roof of the Tower when a fire emblazed DEVLIN burst from the stone staircase to block his advance. The DEVLIN was impervious to normal attacks, and was only weakened when Shadow dowsed it with water. As the DEVLIN flailed around and intensified for one final attack, Herme arrived and cast a magical blanket of ice on the fire-beast, sending the DEVLIN back to the Abyss. The pair was then joined by their three comrades and together the heroes – Rav, Marcellos, Tetra, Herme and Shadow – stormed the roof. But too late! The Reaver had finished toying with the Baron and mercilessly cast Lady Carolina's husband over the edge and onto the rocky shoreline below. The inhabitants of Kallamehr shrieked in disbelief and the adventurers also appeared stunned, deciding caution was the best decision at this time. Their hesitation was all the Riddling Reaver needed to perform a magical leap high onto the top of the Rangor Tower's flag pole. As the Heroes contemplated their plan of action, the Reaver laughed maniacally as he tapped the pole -transforming it into a fifteen foot GIANT SNAKE. Simultaneously, the Reaver launched himself high into the clouds and onto his massive airship which had appeared above. Herme fired a few magical missiles at the fleeing Reaver, but they burst into the airship without causing a blemish. The onlookers and even our adventurers stood in awe, but were soon spurred into action as the SERPENT launched to attack. Shadow had better success against the GIANT SNAKE as he swung his Crescent Spear down like a scythe blade – lopping the SERPENT'S head clean off, and sending the massive bloodied trunk toppling onto the gob smacked audience below.

As the Reaver's airship disappeared over the horizon, only one clue remained – the ornate box that Shadow took from Hammet. Upon closer inspection, the heroes realised that it was inscribed with a riddle. This proved little problem between their five sharp minds and before Marcellos could say "more equipment", they had dunked the box in water and it opened to reveal a scroll and a task. "Collect three items hidden somewhere in the city-port and the Reaver will give them a chance for vengeance!" With the mourning Lady Carolina's blessing and Hammet's young apprentice, Dappa, as their guide, they set off into the city in search of the three hidden items. Only the Riddling Reaver – a servant of Logaan the Trickster God himself – would set such a mischievous assignment.

To find clues, the group split up into pairs to search the coastal streets of Kallamehr – streets interspersed with its fair share of cut-throats and villains. Each of the pairs found numerous clues and had their own special encounters. Tetra and Dappa were followed around by a six-armed monkey called a KRELL. Ravell and Shadow took part in a particularly brutal pit fight against a MINOTAUR. And Marcellos and Herme were ambushed by a GANG OF THUGS but luckily Ravell and Shadow were nearby to assist. Regrouping as sunset approached, the party wasted no further time and began unscrambling the riddles they had found in the various nooks and crannies of Kallamehr. Before long, they had succeeded in the task the Riddling Reaver had set, and the required three items.

1. Ravell climbed the rickety roof of the Nautical Academy to retrieve a Model of a Ship
2. Herme brutally hacked the Gold Ring from the nose of the poisonous gas snorting and pit fighting Minotaur (while it slept in its cage)
3. And Ravell and Marcellos feigned an argument at *The Parrot in a Cage* tavern, so that Herme could snatch the Wine Cask from behind the bar.

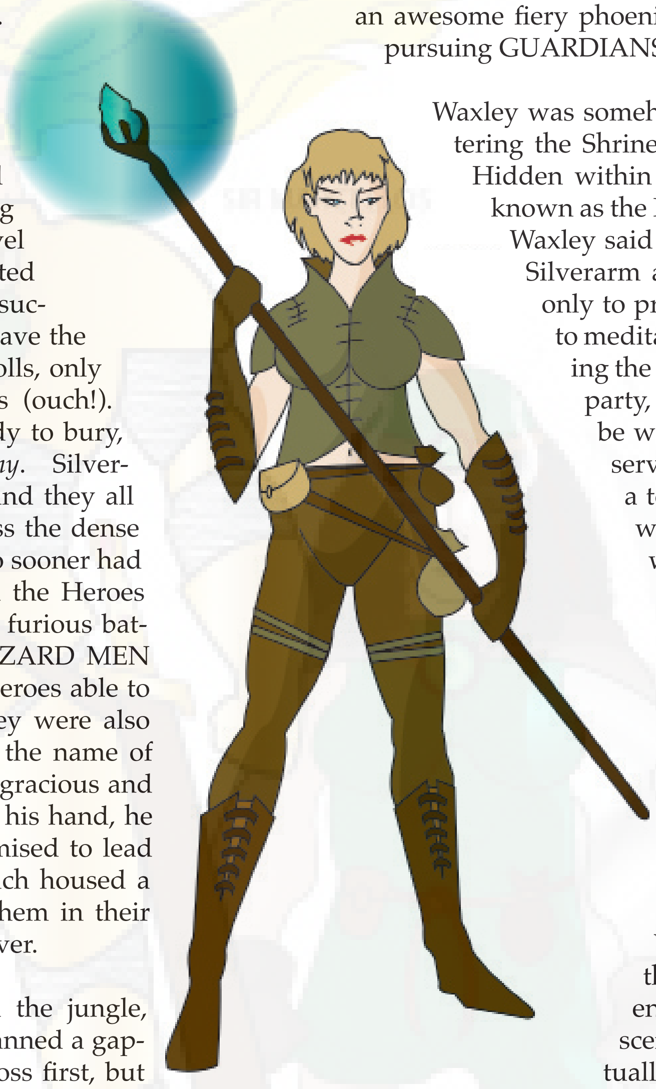


The Human warrior El Ravell and on the opposite page the Human spell-caster Herme

The heroes then cast the three items off Brion's Bluff into the sea. As soon as they did, a magical ship named the *Twice Shy* appeared. Rav, Marcellos, Tetra, Shadow and the young Wizard Dappa joined the Heroes on their voyage whilst Herme decided to accept the mantle of Chief Spellcaster of Kallamehr that was vacated by the deceased Hammett and remain behind to protect Lady Carolina and the city from any future threats. In her place stepped Silverarm, a twenty-five year old Dwarven Guardian (Cleric) of the Earth God Throff. Silverarm had left behind the peaceful underground confines of her Dwarven delve in the hills north of Kallamehr, and swapped it for the adventurers way – where she believed she could spread the good word and also assist in the battle against evil. And what no better party to join!

The *Twice Shy* streaked across the Glimmering Sea on its phantom voyage and the Heroes soon had their hands full. Silverarm proved a useful addition to the heroes' ranks, befuddling a fire breathing CHIMERA and allowing the others to overcome it. A sea encounter with a hungry PLESIOSAURUS was next as it tried unsuccessfully to smash the *Twice Shy*. After fending off the sea monster, they had some fun building a magical glass MANIKIN. But after it didn't respond to their commands the impatient Shadow smashed it into pieces. Rav and Marcellos found company with a friendly ghost called Bhorriz who had been slain by the Reaver in a past life. Tetra and Silverarm discovered the skeletal remains of a pirate and were soon doing battle with a cutlass wielding POLTERGEIST. And then Tetra survived a perilous ordeal in the Battle Paintings Room where she was transported into life or death scenes. Not to be outdone, Shadow and Marcellos entered a Portal of Darkness which miniaturized them and turned their encounter with a mouse into a giant task! Through all of this, the fearful Dappa spent most of the time casting *Invisibility* on himself whenever trouble beckoned.

The most deadly encounter on the voyage was reserved for Ravell, as he moved heroically and autonomously through the lower decks of the *Twice Shy*. Rav was trapped in the Dining Room, pinned to the door by an IMITATOR while FLESH GRUBS began devouring him! Rav was unable to escape and looked doomed, until Shadow burst through, rescuing his teammate from being eaten alive! Silverarm rocked the entire boat when she touched a model replica of the *Twice Shy* and then she was turned into a MONKEY after killing a furry JIB JIB, which just happened to be the pet of the resident GENIE! The heroes then got into a skirmish with a room of stuffed animated SAILORS as the ship entered the Gulf of Shamuz. Just when the adventurers thought the worst was over, the *Twice Shy* was boarded by an army of PLAGUE ZOMBIES. The undead marauders launched a frenzied attack against Shadow, and the tattooed Elf from a far away land was torn apart before his team mates eyes. The rest of the heroes ran back into the ship's hull as the PLAGUE ZOMBIES moaned and wailed in pursuit. Ravell and Tetra found themselves inside a Riddle Room and Rav made a deal with the incumbent GENIE (the same one that transformed Silverarm) to solve riddles in return for the elimination of the PLAGUE ZOMBIE threat. The GENIE agreed and the threat abated.



With the plague threat nullified, the GENIE watched on as Rav and Tetra began a frantic riddle solving exercise, whereby failure to unravel the puzzles within a minute resulted in the scroll exploding! This they succeeded. Marcellos then tried to leave the Riddle Room with one of the scrolls, only to have it explode in his hands (ouch!). Without a scrap of Shadow's body to bury, the heroes alighted the *Twice Shy*. Silverarm's Monkey curse dissipated and they all began their land-based trek across the dense and steamy jungles of Arantis. No sooner had the arduous journey begun than the Heroes were into the green thick of it. A furious battle with a party of MUTANT LIZARD MEN ensured, and not only were the heroes able to overcome the mutant beings, they were also able to rescue an adventurer by the name of Waxley Speed. Waxley was most gracious and knowing Arantis like the back of his hand, he became their guide. Waxley promised to lead them to a Shrine of Destiny, which housed a magical artefact that may help them in their struggle against the Riddling Reaver.

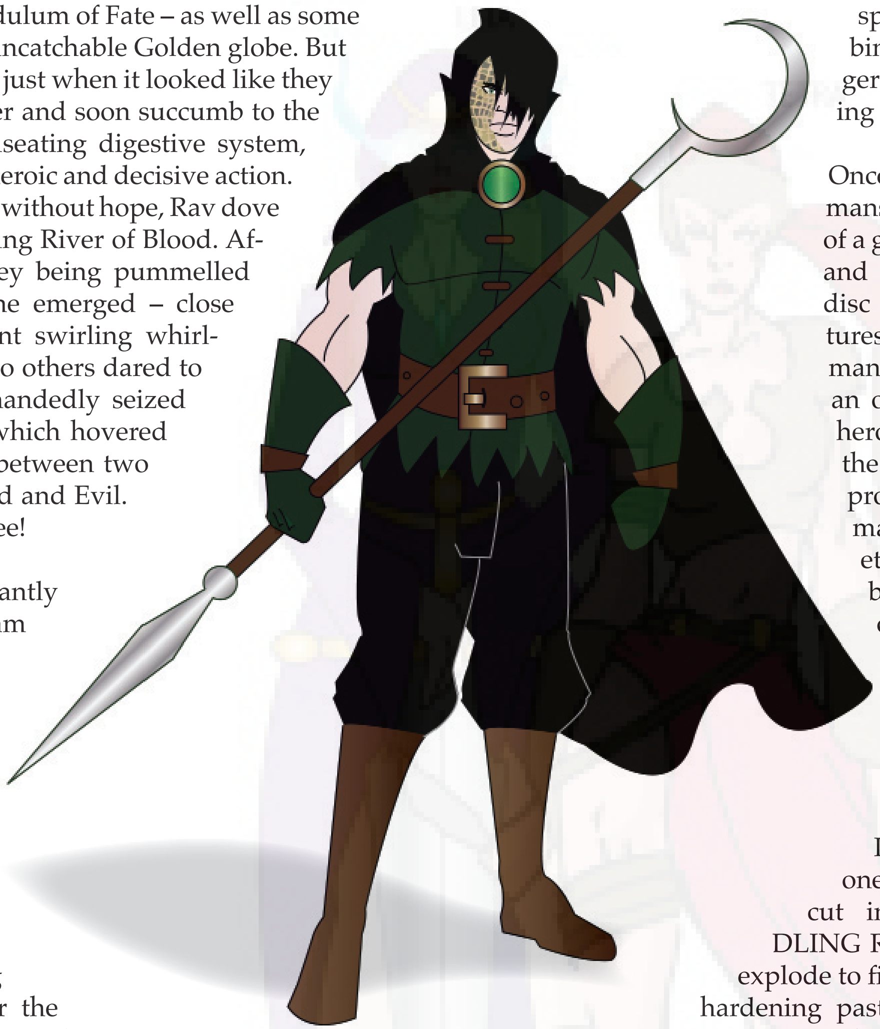
After leading the team through the jungle, they came to a mossy log that spanned a gaping chasm. Tetra attempted to cross first, but was ambushed by a GIANT SPIKE SPIDER. Paralysed by its poisonous spike, Tetra was quickly being wrapped up by the spider's web. But Marcellos fired an arrow that sent the spider free-falling into the chasm. Crossing the chasm, they arrived at the mouth of a cave. Rav dispatched some EYE STINGER guardians while Silverarm cast Spirit Journey through caves to scry for traps and dangers. When Ravell entered the cavern he became hypnotised by the cave dwelling SHAMAN and began attacking his own friends! Dappa was nearly killed by Rav's powerful onslaught until Tetra intervened. And as Bad-Rav and Tetra locked horns, Marcellos again saved the day by sneaking behind the melee and slaying the SHAMAN (and bagging more equipment) and thus breaking Rav's trance.

During a well earnt rest in a jungle clearing, Waxley's body was trapped by a GIANT PITCHER PLANT. The heroes attacked the PLANT'S tendril, severing it, and rescuing a grateful Waxley (for the second time) from its belly. The party then saved some PYGMIES from a band of HEADHUNTERS (Marcellos scared them away with the shaman's mask) and the PYGMIES rewarded the heroes with some mysterious Yokka Eggs. Waxley then led the team across a swamp and into a quick battle with a few slow moving MARSH WRAITHS. Finally they reached the Shrine of Destiny which was set on a high pedestal of rock and guarded by FLYING GUARDIANS. The final showdown involved the GUARDIANS swooping in an attempt to knock the heroes off the connecting bridge. But Ravell and Marcellos both made it across in breath-taking fashion. A Yokka Egg was then used to send an awesome fiery phoenix into the heavens and cause the pursuing GUARDIANS to crumble into the stratosphere.

Waxley was somehow magically prevented from entering the Shrine of Destiny, so he stayed behind. Hidden within the Shrine was the magical item known as the Pendulum of Fate – an artefact that Waxley said could be used against the Reaver. Silverarm also decided to stay behind – not only to protect Waxley, but she also wanted to meditate and pray in honour of today being the Holy Day of Throff. Luckily for the party, a replacement Cleric happened to be wandering by and they enlisted her services in their quest. The Cleric was a tough human Priestess called Leia, who worshipped Rogaar, patron of warriors and professional mercenaries! Leia lived in the mountains close to the Shrine and was happy to replace the Dwarf as the team's magic user. A mysterious and untouchable golden globe then appeared from nowhere and followed the heroes into the Shrine. Rav suspected this was Leia's doing, but she just winked at him. After lighting a candle to summon the KEEPER OF THE WAY an entrance appeared inside the Shrine. Ravell, Dappa and Leia entered and found themselves descending a slimy, fleshy tract. Eventually they entered a large, gunk-filled gorge and they shouted up to Marcellos and Tetra to come down (an invitation they declined).

Leia used her Eye Spirit spell to see down the many corridors that branched away from the huge cavern inside the belly of the Shrine. Having decided on a route, they trekked deeper within. Ravell evaded a dark swooping WRAPPER that tried to envelop him then nearly lost a hand grabbing a golden chalice which transformed into a METAL SENTINEL that was hell bent on destruction. Such was the SENTINEL's fury that Rav had to flee (rare!) and he and Dappa ran straight into a room of digestive PURPLE HAIR. Both were helplessly trapped until Leia came to the rescue, cutting them free. Ravell then met up with Marcellos and Tetra (who both finally decided to join in) – only to witness Priestess Leia's death against a fearsome gas breathing and foul smelling MUCALYTIC. Leia was being thrown around from wall to wall like a rag doll while her friends hacked the MUCALYTIC to its grisly end. As the brave Leia lay dying in a pool of blood and muck she cast her final spell – communicating with her deity Hamaskis she asked where the Pendulum of Fate was located – Hamaskis was gracious and revealed the Pendulum was "between Good and Evil". Hamaskis also told the party that they were inside the living body of some God-time creature!

Having recovered from the shock of Leia's death, Hamaskis useless clue, and the fact that they were slowly being digested, the heroes spent the next few hours searching exhaustively for the Pendulum of Fate – as well as some time trying to catch the uncatchable Golden globe. But they were stumped. And just when it looked like they would be trapped forever and soon succumb to the God-time creature's nauseating digestive system, Ravell made a critically heroic and decisive action. As the others languished without hope, Rav dove into a dangerously gushing River of Blood. After a nightmarish journey being pummelled in the torrential river, he emerged – close to death – inside a giant swirling whirlpool room. And where no others dared to tread, Rav then single-handedly seized the Pendulum of Fate, which hovered – beating like a heart – between two monolith ICONS of Good and Evil.
El Ravell – we bow to thee!

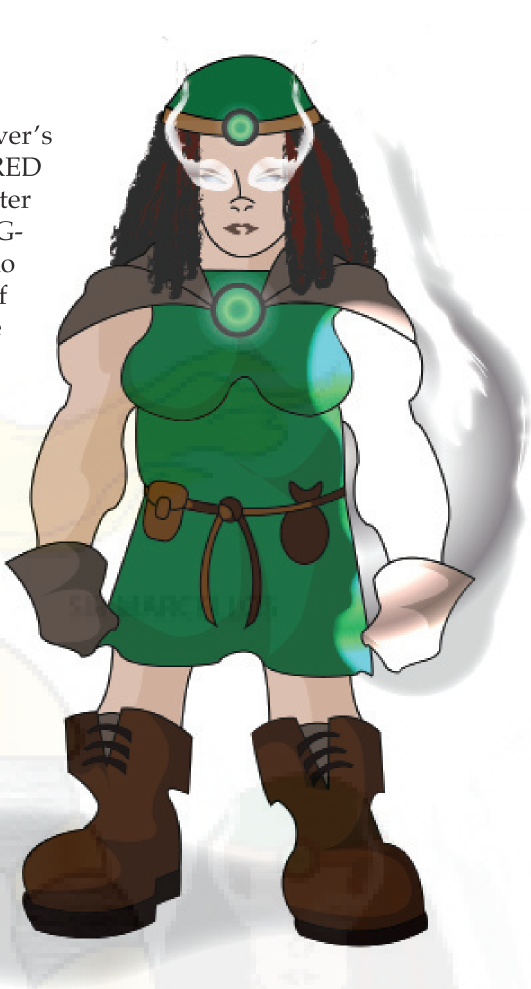


Ravell returned triumphantly to his gob smacked team and they all exited the Shrine's innards, with that ever watchful and ever present golden globe in toe. But no sooner had the party escaped that they came face to face with the true horror of deception. Waxley Speed was in fact the Riddling Reaver! Unable to enter the Shrine himself (due to Godtime magical protections), the Reaver needed the heroes to retrieve the Pendulum for him! He had steered the heroes to Arantis using the *Twice Shy* and then guided them to the Shrine. The golden globe was actually a GENIE under the Reaver's watchful command and it suddenly transformed and wrenched the Pendulum from Ravell's grasp, launching it into the hands of its new master! Before any of the heroes had to time to mutter "No Fair", the Reaver had once again magically boarded his awaiting airship and disappeared into the mountains. Luckily Silverarm was still close by and quickly cast another Spirit Journey to appear aboard the Reaver's airship and discover where it was destined. Dappa, Rav, Tetra, Marcellos and Silverarm wasted no time – so began the pursuit.

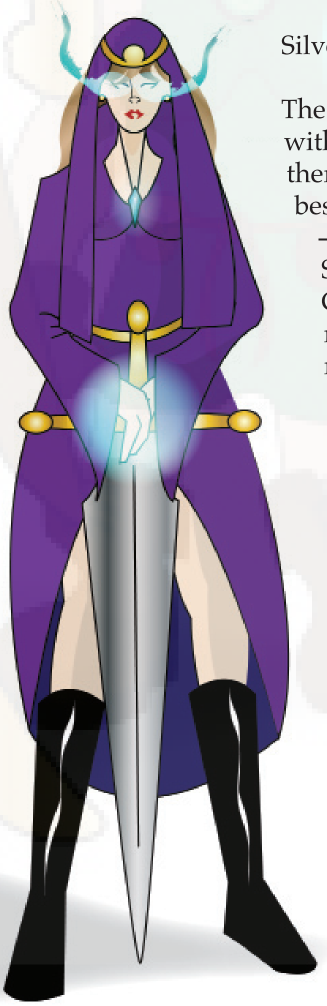
After a day of uneventful travel, the heroes discovered some jelly covered skeletons known as REPLICANTHS walking up a trail that ran alongside a backward flowing waterfall! The world in this part of Arantis seemed very different and weird indeed. Following the REPLICANTHS the party arrived at a magnificent marble building. A LEPRECHAUN juggling three blue bottles greeted them and made Marcellos continue juggling the bottles while he went to open the magical doors for them. But the bottles grew heavier and heavier, and eventually Marcellos fumbled one, sending it smashing onto the ground. The Leprechaun darted through the door as an angry GENIE emerged from the broken bottle (a lot of Genies, I know!). The GENIE demanded to know where the LEPRECHAUN went. Ravell obliged and pointed to the doors, but as the GENIE darted after the LEPRECHAUN, the LEPRECHAUN cast a spell on the dibber dobbing Rav, making his fingers all thumbs, and lowering his SKILL!

Once inside the Reaver's mansion, the party disposed of a group of REPLICANTHS and some knife throwing disc shaped WHEELIE creatures. A long hallway, with many side doors, ended at an ornate golden door. The heroes went straight for the gold door but it was protected by magic! The magical door had a big eye etched into it and a voice bellowed that it would only open for the Riddling Reaver himself. Silverarm cast a Spirit Eye and scryed the adjoining rooms of the Reaver's domain, then it was onto the action! Ravell charged through one of the side doors and cut into a STUFFED RIDDLING REAVER, only to have it explode to fill the room with a sticky hardening paste. Both Rav and Tetra were certain to be trapped and suffocated to death had it not been for Marcellos, whose quick thinking pulled them to safely. Marcellos you're our hero! After that, the team became wary of other traps and avoided the other stuffed REAVERS that occupied numerous rooms.

Silverarm found wine bottles filled with what looked like trapped adventurers. She opened them all, only to discover they imprisoned CUT-THROATS who once tried to steal the Reaver's treasures. A frenzied battle ensued, with the CUT-THROATS nearly finishing off Silverarm had it not been for the awesome trio of fighters who intervened – hooray for the Three Amigo's – Ravell, Tetra and Marcellos. Finally, the party entered a room with cupboards inscribed with yet more riddles. Opening the doors sprang some nasty surprises. A GIANT SPIDER, a GIANT FROG, 500 pairs of breeches, a Yokka Egg, a torrent of LEECH infested swamp water, piles of gold (fake of course) and a pair of dice. Back at the big eyed door, the rampaging Rav had a great idea. He stormed into one of the stuffed Reaver rooms and decapitated one of them, narrowly avoiding a sneezing feather trap. Rav then presented the Reaver's head to the big eye, which said "Master, I've been waiting for you” and promptly opened.



Above is the Dwarf cleric Silverarm, below the Human cleric Leia, and on the opposite page the Elf ranger Shadow



Underground, stone stairs descended to the Reaver’s Laboratory. The party found vials of POWDERED CREATURES, one of which had fallen into water and turned into a MINIATURE SILVER DRAGON. Though a challenge to overcome, it was no match for our heroes. Rav grabbed a number of the creature vials and all sensed that they were very close to finding the Reaver. They stormed yet another room and cut through a handful of REPLICANTHS who were manufacturing yet more REPLICANTHS. The party then avoided some of the more bizarre rooms that branched off the main corridor. Rooms that contained “Particle blenders”, “Mutating fields” and “Eternal Voids”. One room they did investigate, however, was one that contained a giant suit of MECHANICAL ARMOUR.

Marcellos stepped inside and mastered the controls which animated the monstrous Armour, and then it was on to the final showdown! The armoured Marcellos together with Tetra, Rav, Silverarm and Dappa entered a huge cavern swarming with over one-hundred torch bearing REPLICANTHS. At the other end, in front of a wall of magical flame and behind a radiant pool of water, the RIDDLING REAVER continued his bizarre ritual that sought to destroy the Pendulum of Fate and throw Allansia into Chaos! Marcellos was stung into action! His MECHANICAL ARMOUR smashed Replicanths left and right, absorbing the endless clubbing damage from the REPLICANTHS clammy fists. Silverarm cast Mind Altering spells to disable yet more REPLICANTHS while Tetra engaged in the more traditional melee of steel cracking against skeletal bone!

The Riddling Reaver was unperturbed and cackled loudly as the fury ensued. Sensing that the Reaver needed only a few more precious moments to complete the ritual, an invisible Dappa (invisible), and Ravell (sneaking in the shadows), moved into range of the tranquil pool. With great vigour, they cast the Miniature powdered creatures into the water. Immediately they transformed. DEATH DOGS, GARKS, a MAMMOTH, a MANTICORE, GIANT NANDI BEARS and a GIANT SCORPION.

The already fantastic battle erupted into absolute mayhem. Creature against Hero, REPLICANTH against creature, hero against REPLICANTH, Creature against Creature... an all-in battle royale. Even the RIDDLING REAVER himself was attacked. The roaring MANTICORE slashed at the Reaver causing his ritualistic spell to be broken! As the Pendulum fell into the pool, and the Reaver focused his attention on the MANTICORE, the GIANT SCORPION also attacked, knocking the Riddling Reaver into the magical wall of fire behind him – disappearing in a white flash. Following that, within minutes, it was all over. The remaining creatures and every last REPLICANTH lay slain... a battlefield strewn with broken bones, blobs of jelly, blood, guts and bodies. All that stood were the heroes of Kallamehr – the rampaging Ravell, mighty Marcellos, the tenacious Tetra and the mystical Silverarm. Oh, and Dappa!

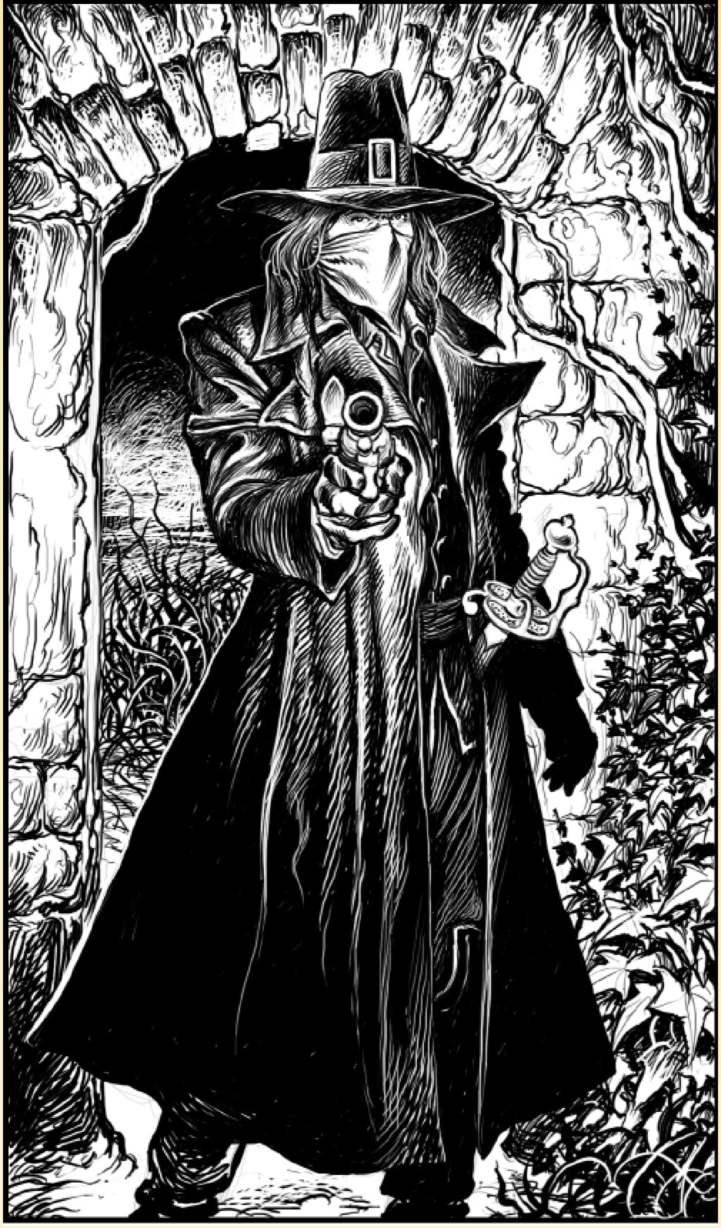
The heroes had saved the world of Titan! And with the Riddling Reaver vanquished, the Father of the World Titan himself appeared. Titan bestowed upon each of them a wondrous gift – an Eye patch of Seeing (Rav), the magical Sword of Timakron (Marcellos), an Icon of Good (Tetra), and a Genie Bottle of Entrapment (Silverarm). Dappa was given a Mushroom of Teleportation and used it to transport the entire party back to Kallamehr. Waiting there was Lady Carolina and Herme – and a magnificent festival was arranged to herald their return. Moreover, each adventurer was tattooed with a magical symbol that would aid them on future adventures against the ever growing forces of Evil – an Eagle for Farseeing (Tetra), a Cobra for Mesmerising (Marcellos), a Tiger for Ferocity (Rav), and a Rising Sun for Immunity (Silverarm).

The Heroes of Kallamehr – a new force of Good – had arrived, and word of their phenomenal accomplishment in defeating the Riddling Reaver quickly spread throughout the civilized world. With their fame preceding them, and a world of chaos and adventure still to explore, it was on to Salamonis – the greatest city in all Allansia! **FF**

bang!

gunpowder technology in titan[1]

So far it has all been sword and sorcery, but have you ever felt the need to keep a chunk of explosive weaponry under your pillow? **Warren McGuire** goes about explaining the potted appearances of such weaponry in *Fighting Fantasy*.



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Titan, a barbaric world of Sword and Sorcery! Great warriors and mighty sorcerers stalk the land, vanquishing evil and banishing darkness. Few can challenge these masters of war, who have honed their skills with many years of training and study. But picture the scene…

A robe-swathed warrior, famed throughout the lands for his skill with the sword, challenges a puny robber of his ancestral tombs. Brandishing his deadly, curved sword, he knows that his enemy will soon lie dead at his feet. But suddenly the thief pulls a strange device from his belt and points it at the swordsman. With a loud cracking bang, the warrior is knocked from his feet, his chest exploding in a shower of blood, as his soul wings its way from his dying body. The robber tucks his PISTOL into his belt and disappears into the crowd.[2]

A new element has entered the deadly mix of war, and things will never be the same again. Gunpowder, that deadly alchemical black powder, gives its wielder the powers of a great sorcerer without the years of arcane study. Suddenly the tables have been turned, and anyone can bring destruction down on their enemies at the strike of a spark or the pull of a trigger.

So next time you find yourself in battle in Titan, remember that times are changing fast and the rules have been rewritten. Gunpowder technology is here to stay, and we thought that we should provide YOU, the brave adventurers who walk those war-torn lands, with a (hopefully not too dodgy) dossier on the status of weapons of mass destruction in Titan. You can be sure of one thing – your life will depend on it!

Gunpowder, Flashpowder and Firepowder

In *The Fighting Fantasy 10th Anniversary Yearbook*, the entry for Moonsday 19th of Freeze reads “Gunpowder invented by Fangthane Dwarfs, 1955 OT”.[3] This reveals that gunpowder technology has been known in Titan for over 300 years, at least by Dwarfs, so it is not a surprise that gunpowder, under various names, features in many *Fighting Fantasy* publications set in Titan. Perhaps the most (in) famous occurrence is in *The Crown of Kings*, where the hero’s fellow prisoner tells the following tale about something called “flash powder”:

> *My name is Farren Whyde and my kingdom is Ruddlestone, way to the west beyond the Zanzunus. In my own kingdom I was renowned for my discoveries, My most important discovery was a flash powder which would propel a missile further than any arrow could be fired. It was this cursed discovery which attracted the attentions of the Archmage ... Since that time his threats have kept me working on my project. But I fear that his own ambitions will see its use only for conquest, not for the defence of peace.*[4]

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[1] Thanks must go to Andrew Wright for his analysis of Cinnabar’s weaponry, which has been incorporated in this article.

[2] Does this scene sound familiar to you? We should hope so! If not, well we can only suggest that you immediately go and buy yourself a copy of the film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Essential viewing for those of a Fighting Fantastical mind.

[3] *The Fighting Fantasy 10th Anniversary Yearbook* – 39.

[4] *The Crown of Kings* – 79.

Whyde's story suggests that flash powder is some wonderful new invention. But this is not the only occurrence of it in the *Sorcery!* series, indicating that his account is not the whole story, and it is perhaps an outright fabrication (which would not surprising, given his ultimate identity). In *The Seven Serpents*, you may be asked if you possess any "flash-fire powder", although there does not appear to be anywhere you can acquire this substance in any of the *Sorcery!* books.[5]

This substance makes another appearance in *Battleblade Warrior*. In a memorable scene, Julius Lecarte, who describes it as "Flashpowder, Sulis Vitae from Sardath", mixes it with oil and soaks wood with it in an attempt to blow up a group of Lizard Men.[6] We learn that, on ignition, "An incredibly hot sheet of flame explodes upwards into the sky, carrying with it the screams of dying Lizard Men".[7] The Sardath link is very interesting in light of the connection between Dwarfs and gunpowder in Titan, since Sardath is home to many Dwarfs and lies close to Fangthane.[8]

Another name for gunpowder in Allansia appears to be "Firepowder". In *The Trolltooth Wars*, Chadda Darkmane is given a package of firepowder by Zagor as a weapon to use against Zharradan Marr. He describes its use and effects to Darkmane as follows:

> *But this is no magical device. Inside this package is firepowder. It will explode like a fireball. Look. Do you see this string here? It is the fuse. Light the string with this tinderbox. It will glow when it catches. There will be a delay while the string burns. But when it burns down to the package, a great fireball will burst out of the package and destroy anything within range.*[9]

This substance works just like gunpowder, and is described as being non-magical, so it is probable that is indeed what it is. Interestingly, Thugruff, on discovering it aboard the Galleykeep, recognises it: "Look! Firepowder!".[10] This, and the fact that firepowder can be bought in the markets of Rimon in Arantis,[11] suggests that this substance is widely known in Allansia.

And returning again to the Old World, it seems likely that the "explosive powder" which was used to destroy the town of Gornt in Gallantaria was also gunpowder.[12] Only in the far continent of Khul is there no record of gunpowder, flashpowder, firepowder or explosive powder.

A number of other explosives are encountered in the *Fighting Fantasy* series, and although it is not clear that they are gunpowder based, it is quite possible that they are. The only mention of explosives in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* is in the account of the siege of Vymorna, were we read that:

> *For six years now, the combined forces of magic, explosives, battering-rams and sheer weight of numbers have been slamming against the walls of the ancient city on the mouth of the Vymorn River.*[14]

The naming of "explosives" separately from "magic" suggests that this is gunpowder (or similar chemical) explosive, and that this technology is (terrifyingly!) known to the Lizard Men. No indication is given how these explosives are delivered. Interestingly, there is little additional information on this in *Battleblade Warrior*, where we read of the "bombardment of rocks and exploding balls of sulphur".[15] Whether this is related to gunpowder is unclear, and it may, perhaps, represent some other deadly alchemical mix.

Another encounter with explosives which may or may not be gunpowder based is related in *Knights of Doom*:

> *A wicker basket in one corner is full of spiked iron spheres with wicks protruding from their metal casings: grenades. These vicious explosive devices have been developed by alchemists and are known for their destructive power – not to mention their unreliability. If you ever want to use a grenade, you should light the fuse with your tinderbox, or a nearby fire source, then hurl it at your target. When you use a grenade, roll one dice: on a roll of 1, the grenade is a dud and will not go off; a roll of 2-5 means that it hits its target, doing*

Igneolite

A substance called Igneolite, invented by the alchemist Azudraz, appears in the gamebook *Portal of Evil*, which is set in southwest Khul. Although this has some similarities with gunpowder, it is clearly some other, perhaps partially magical substance:

> *The torch falls from Azudraz's metal hand and drops on the pile of crumpled paper at the place where the various fuses meet. Within seconds, the centre of the room is ablaze; thick smoke fills the air, and all you can see are the eager lines of fire running towards the sacks of Igneolite. You drop to the floor and cover your head, expecting an explosion; but each sack, as the flame reaches it, bursts with a gentle pop, sending up a cloud of glowing dust which coats the stonework. When the flames have died and all the sacks have burst, you inspect the walls. You have been imprisoned: Igneolite melts and remoulds stone in an instant.*[13]

Although Igneolite isn't gunpowder, it is interesting that the hero drops to the floor and covers their head, expecting an explosion. This might suggest a familiarity with explosive powders on their part, but there is no mention of explosions being used by the miners in *Portal of Evil*.

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[5] *The Seven Serpents* – 155.
[6] *Battleblade Warrior* – 349.
[7] *Battleblade Warrior* – 16, see also 63, 214, and 262.
[8] *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* – 15/19.
[9] *The Trolltooth Wars* – 286.
[10] *The Trolltooth Wars* – 268, see also pages 269, 279, and 286.
[11] *Curse of the Mummy* – 112.
[12] *Legend of the Shadow Warriors* – 300.
[13] *Portal of Evil* – 127.
[14] *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* – 93/212.
[15] *Battleblade Warrior* – Background.

1 dice worth of damage; however, on a roll of 6, the thing explodes prematurely, causing YOU one dice worth of damage![16]

These grenades are found in the Juggernaut's armoury, and although it's not stated that they are filled with gunpowder (in fact the word "wick" suggests there might be more to it), they are definitely chemical rather than magical explosives.

Cannon

Gunpowder is not only used as an explosive in Titan. It is also used for the purposes of projecting missiles, as Farren Whyde indicates, and in most cases in Titan this means cannon, which appear to be in use in the seas west of Allansia. In *City of Thieves*, you encounter a muscle-bound, bare-chested man who is playing "catch" with cannon-balls in the Market Square in Port Blacksand.[17] In addition, one of the ships docked in Blacksand harbour is illustrated as having two cannon protruding from cannon-ports in the hull.[18] Cannon also appear in and around Port Blacksand in *Temple of Terror*.[19] In this adventure, you can get passage on the pirate ship *Belladonna*, where "Your job will be to load cannonballs during battle". All too soon you are called to duty ("you take your place at your cannon"), as the *Belladonna* comes under attack from a Dwarven man-of-war ship. Things soon go from bad to worse: "Noise suddenly erupts all around as the man-of-war's cannonballs smash into the *Belladonna*. The order is given to fire, but you realise the *Belladonna* is no match for the battleship." This indicates that cannon technology is used by both human pirates and Dwarf sailors off the Allansian coast.

More nautical cannonry appears in *Demons of the Deep* in the seas west of Allansia. The pirate ship *Troll* is illustrated with a cannon protruding from a cannon-port.[20] Furthermore, the explosive power of gunpowder becomes all to apparent when the pirate ship *Troll* is set on fire: "Behind you comes an explosion, as the fire you set reaches the powder stores and sends *Troll* to Davy Jones's locker".[21] Cannon-ports may also be visible in the illustration of the sunken ship in Atlantis, although the illustration is not entirely clear, and the same can be said for one of the ships illustrated in Blacksand harbour in *Dungeoneer*.[22]

Interestingly, no mention of cannon is made in the discussion of ships in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*, although rams, catapults and ballistae are mentioned.[23] None of the illustrations accompanying these descriptions show cannon either. Other nautical scenes in *Fighting Fantasy* are also silent on the use of cannon, including those in *Seas of Blood*, *Master of Chaos*, *The Keep of the Lich-Lord*, *Bloodbones* (but see "Firearms" below) and *The Riddling Reaver*, although it is just possible that the model ship on the wall of *The Wayfarer's Rest* in Kharé features cannon-portholes.[24]

gunpowder technology in the deathtrap dungeon computer game

A number of explosive devices and weapons are featured in the *Deathtrap Dungeon* computer game by Eidos. Although some of these are magical (e.g. the War Pigs of Doom), at least one of them is a conventional firearm – the blunderbuss. This handheld firearm with a flared barrel uses "Black Powder" to shoot a deadly spray of nails and lead shot at the enemy. It is described as a "Dwarven invention". Although this looks like incontrovertible evidence for the existence of firearms in north-west Allansia, the relationship of the *Deathtrap Dungeon* computer game to the rest of *Fighting Fantasy* canon is unclear, since the descriptions of Fang and Baron Sukumvit which accompany the game don't really fit with what we know about them from other sources.

Firearms

Gunpowder powered firearms are explicitly mentioned in three *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks: (*Magehunter*, *Howl of the Werewolf* and *Stormslayer*), illustrated in another (*Bloodbones*), and they are implied in Farren Whyde's description of flash powder discussed above.

In *Magehunter*, you have a "flintlock pistol" in your possession, and you take this to Titan with you in the adventure.[25] You, Mencius and the flintlock pistol do not, however, originate in Titan, but in some other time or place. As such, the flintlock pistol in Magehunter is not technology from Titan, and so tells us nothing about the development of firearms there.

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[16] *Knights of Doom* – 390.
[17] *City of Thieves* – 378, 398.
[18] *City of Thieves* – 171.
[19] *Temple of Terror* – 238, and 187, 308, and 230.
[20] *Demons of the Deep* – 1.
[21] *Demons of the Deep* – 189.
[22] *Demons of the Deep* – 282; *Dungeoneer* – 288.
[23] *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* – 118-9/278-9.
[24] *Kharé –Cityport of Traps* – 110.
[25] *Magehunter* – "The Most Revered Treatise of MAGE HUNTING", Background.

As was noted above, there is no evidence for cannon technology in *Bloodbones*, despite its nautical setting. Nothing in the text hints at the existence of any gunpowder-based technology whatsoever. The only (non-gunpowder-based) incendiary weapon mentioned is the burning ball of pitch launched at the *Sea Maiden*.[26] In fact the only evidence for gunpowder-based technology in *Bloodbones* appears on its cover illustration, which appears to show three flintlock firearms about the person of Cinnabar.[27] There are two short-barrelled pistols – the handgrip, metal side-plate and trigger of a pistol tucked into his belt are visible on the one on his left, and on his right the outline of another hand grip sticks out beneath the parrot's wing. Further up, on the left side of Cinnabar's chest, and alongside the bandolier buckle, there's a handgrip, metal side-plate, and trigger of what looks like a long-barrelled flintlock rifle running down Cinnabar's body to his right hip where it disappears under his coat. What may be the top of a powder-horn also appears on his left-hand side. The pistol doesn't appear in the otherwise similar illustrations of Cinnabar accompanying the text of *Bloodbones*.[28] However, the possible powder-horn (again on his left-hand side) appears in one of the illustrations.[29]

Howl of the Werewolf, set in Mauristatia in the Old World, provides further examples of the use of gunpowder technology, with no indication that it comes from some other world or time. What is more, this gunpowder technology is of a fairly advanced sort: flintlock pistols. You have three potential encounters with flintlock pistols in the cursed land of Lupravia:

1. Van Richten the Vampire Hunter has one which you can end up being shot by and/or in possession of.[30]
2. The Headless Horseman carries one, and is more than happy to use it.[31]
3. In *The Gibbet Tree*, you may find a box which has a flintlock pistol inside it. It is described as an "ornate piece".[32]

In addition, you may buy lead bullets or have silver ones made for you at the stall of Plumbus Gelt the alchemist in Vargenhof.[33] Instructions for using a flintlock pistol are also given in *Howl of the Werewolf*.[34] It is worth noting that these are flintlock pistols, not matchlock ones, and are a relatively advanced form of firearm.

Finally, you can buy a blunderbuss, blackpowder and shot in Crystal City in Femphrey, in *Fighting Fantasy*'s latest adventure, *Stormslayer*.[35] It seems that firearms are becoming part of the everyday arsenal of the warrior in the Old World.

Gunpowder Technology in Titan

Reviewing all the evidence then, we can say the following about gunpowder technology in Titan. There is next to no evidence for use of gunpowder in Khul. Perhaps this is because it simply hasn't been mentioned in any of the gamebooks set there. Or maybe the Dark Continent is lagging behind Allansia and the Old World in its technological development, which is quite possible given its geographical isolation. Use of gunpowder as an explosive is widespread in Allansia, and although it was originally associated with Dwarfs, this doesn't appear to be the case any more. In addition, cannon are used by ships in the Western Ocean. Curiously there is no record of cannon being used on land in Allansia – why this should be is unknown. There is very little evidence for the use of firearms in Allansia – of the two known cases, one (*Magehunter*) doesn't count as the pistol comes from another world, and the other (the *Deathtrap Dungeon* computer game) may fall outside of *Fighting Fantasy* canon. It is in the Old World that we see the greatest technological advancement in the use of gunpowder. In addition to its use as an explosive, it is used to power firearms of a rather advanced nature – flintlock pistols (and rifles if the illustration of Cinnabar on the cover of *Bloodbones* is anything to go by). The existence of such advanced weaponry doesn't seem to fit well with the claims of Farren Whyde in *The Crown of Kings*, but Whyde's duplicitous nature may go some way to explaining this. It is rather more difficult to explain the situation in the Old World in light of the status of gunpowder technology elsewhere in Titan though. How is it that the Old World is so advanced and how come firearms don't seem to have spread beyond its shores? Since *Howl of the Werewolf* is set in or around 285 AC,[37] it is not possible to suggest that this is the result of the gamebooks being set at different periods in Titan's history. Whatever the reason, it is only a matter of time before pistols begin to be used in Allansia and beyond too.

And the upshot of all of this? Well things are changing dramatically in Titan, as weapons of mass destruction become available to the common warrior. Whole new sets of skills will need to be learned (e.g. marksmanship, bomb-manufacture), and other skills (and equipment) may become obsolete (what good are shields and armour against bullets?!). And we, as gamers, will need to work out how to incorporate these technologies into our rulebooks. So next time you ride into battle swinging your sword or uttering your spells, remember that the rules of engagement have changed for ever. You have been warned! **FF**

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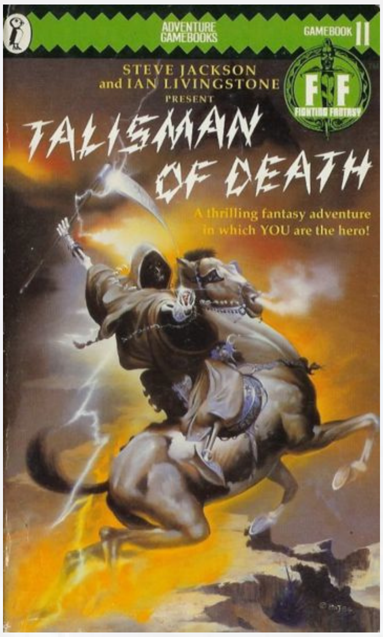
[26] *Bloodbones* – 352.
[27] *Bloodbones* – Front Cover.
[28] *Bloodbones* – 182, 333.
[29] *Bloodbones* – 182.
[30] *Howl of the Werewolf* – 478.
[31] *Howl of the Werewolf* – 190.
[32] *Howl of the Werewolf* – 481.
[33] *Howl of the Werewolf* – 54.
[34] *Howl of the Werewolf* – 400, see also 182, 311, 374, 376, 379, 450, 462, 465, 501, and 506 for examples of use.
[35] *Stormslayer* – 70.
[36] *Deathtrap Dungeon* (PlayStation) Manual: Ranged Weapons; note that the manual for the PC version doesn't include the statement on the Dwarven origins of the blunderbuss.
[37] *Howl of the Werewolf* – 328.

Everything I Really Need to Know I Learnt from Reading *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks
Part 2

Just down the road from the School of Hard Knocks is the University of Your Adventure Ends Here. Sneak into the lecture hall as **Ed Jolley** explains what we can learn from the misfortunes of mad genii, pirates, cyborgs, networked aliens and scaly creatures with flat-topped heads.

Talisman of Death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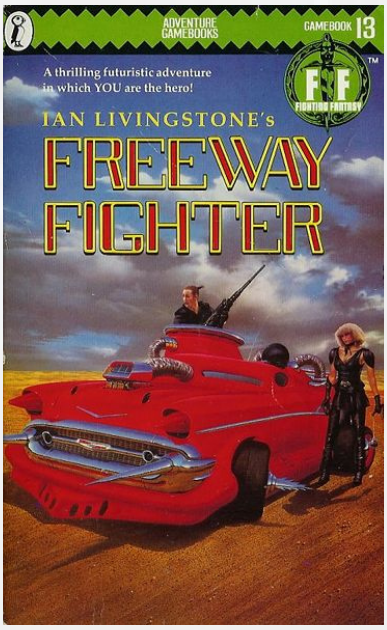
TALISMAN OF DEATH
A thrilling fantasy adventure in which YOU are the hero!

Why are so many people keen to get their hands on the Talisman of Death? Okay, so the Priesthood of Death want it because they can use it to summon their Fleshless King and have him wipe out all other living beings, leaving them to rule Orb, but that doesn't explain its appeal to Hawkana, the Thieves' Guild or Tyutchev and his friends. Yes, it's exceptionally valuable, and would make a pretty stylish accessory for most Goths, but that scarcely compensates for the whole 'only exists to bring about the destruction of all life on the planet' aspect. Being the wealthiest or most fashionable of the small heaps of dust into which everyone gets turned is sure to lose its appeal sooner or later.

Moral: Avoid impulse-buying. The thing may look nice in the shop, but is it really going to be any use to you when you get it home?

Space Assassin



Mad scientist Cyrus lurks on his ship the *Vandervecken*, which he's filled with all kinds of interesting surprises for any intruders who may get on board. Such as a bomb designed to eliminate the curious but careless (and liable to cause a significant hull breach in the process), controls which, if tampered with, are liable to cause the whole ship to explode, a robotic pilot with a philosophical bent, which will readily betray him to any passing assassin who cares to validate its rather solipsistic outlook, and an antiquated ship's computer with no safeguards to keep irresponsible meddlers from blowing large holes in its CPU. Living in such an environment, Cyrus is likely to wind up in a sorry state if Mr Bean gets on board, never mind a trained killer.

Moral: Most accidents happen in the home. Take a good look at the state in which you've left things, and see if you're overlooking any potential hazards.

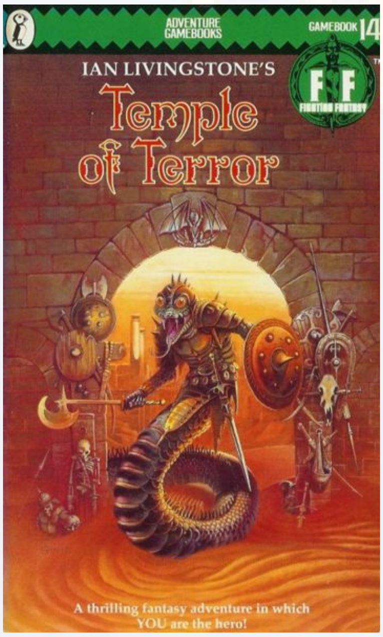
Freeway Fighter

In the year 2023, with over 85% of the global population dead, most from a disease, the rest as a consequence of the breakdown of society, one of the principal threats faced by the survivors who seek to rebuild civilisation is the continued existence of hotels. Seriously. During your vital quest, if you choose to spend a night in a hotel on the outward journey, you give a religious nutter a chance to try and immolate your car, thereby preventing you from achieving your goal. Stop off at a hotel on the homeward run and you encounter Manuel's evil counterpart, who throws you a couple of his pets and lethally infects you. You can bet that in years to come, juvenile pranksters will frequently attach toy rats to the statue raised in your honour, because your dying in such an unheroic manner just invites mockery.

Moral: There's nothing shameful about roughing it. Don't go needlessly seeking luxury unless you know you can afford the price.

Temple of Terror

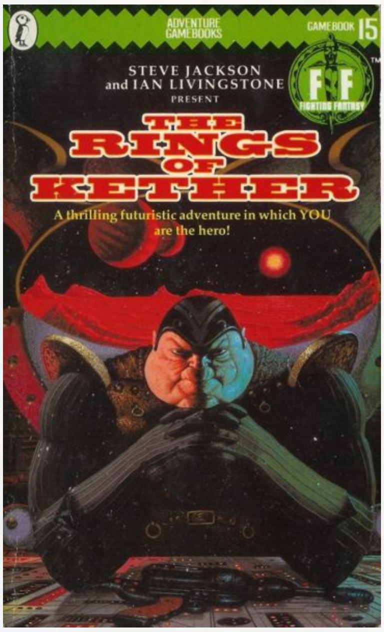
Vatos is a hazardous place, but a surprisingly large number of its more hostile residents have unexpected, and more often than not completely illogical, vulnerabilities. Assorted bits of tat that you scavenged from tiresome fools who would insist on attacking you, picked up from a passing merchant on a whim, or even just stumbled across while trudging through the desert, turn out to be devastatingly effective against some of the most fearsome opponents. It's crazy – like going through a dodgy part of town after dark, running into a six foot six mugger, and unexpectedly being able to immobilise him with a wad of chewing gum you trod in half a mile back. Of course, you do have to use the right thing against the right antagonist. Try using a copy of *The Big Issue* to fend off some crazed junkie who's actually allergic to the wood they use in lolly sticks,



and you're going to wind up in a right old state.
Moral: Don't be too quick to throw things out. You can never tell when what seems like a bit of useless old junk might turn out to be just what you need.

The Rings of Kether

One of your more successful interrogations provides you with the location of an office from which the operation you seek to break up is being run, and a satellite that's being used by the criminals in question. Should you decide to hamper the bad guys' plans by going into orbit and nuking the satellite, you then find your investigation grinding to a halt because you've run out of leads. Now, unless a chunk of debris from the satellite just happened to obliterate that office, it seems to me that you should still be able to call in and exchange peculiar zero-based insults with a few of the felons based there, but apparently you've forgotten about it. Maybe the real zero is your IQ, eh?
Moral: Be sure to note down anything important that might slip your mind before you've done what needs doing.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THE RINGS OF KETHER
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Seas of Blood

Once again the finals of the Inland Sea's Pirate of the Year contest are to be decided by a straightforward comparison of spoils. If you have accumulated 799 or fewer gold pieces, Abdul the Butcher wins, but if you have at least 800, victory is yours. Which means Abdul must have something like 799 gold and a couple of silvers. You get 800, and he'll be kicking himself for getting his grog and hardtack at the corner shop rather than taking advantage of the '3 for 2' offer on piratical supplies at Sparr!
Moral: Don't neglect your small change. It can mount up surprisingly quickly.

Appointment with F.E.A.R.

Vladimir Utoshki, the Titanium Cyborg, has come up with a foolproof plan for world domination. But before implementing his diabolical scheme, he calls a meeting of all his favourite villainous cronies to let them know about it. Alas, before they've even got to item 3 on the agenda (More cackling and gloating), in bursts superhero the Silver Crusader. Within seconds the Crusader has deactivated Utoshki's peripherals (Ow!), and in little more time than it takes to say, "Curses, foiled again!" Vlad's facing half a dozen consecutive life sentences for aggravated naughtiness.
Moral: There's a time for meetings and a time for action.

Rebel Planet

The Arcadian Empire has just one weak spot – the computer which controls everything. It does, thus, come as something of a surprise that the building which houses that computer also contains a weapons dump, in which can be found a substantial quantity of explosives. The reason for this is a mystery – perhaps the dump was placed there in accordance with the Arcadian equivalent of Feng Shui, or maybe it's just so hard to get planning permission for building anything within the Empire that some harassed Arcadian bureaucrat combined two separate projects in one application to cut down on paperwork. Whatever the truth, this inventive architectural juxtaposition provides a human operative with everything necessary for giving the whole Empire the Blue Screen of Death, and thus ultimately proves rather impractical from an Arcadian perspective.
Moral: Much unpleasantness can be avoided if you put things somewhere sensible.

Demons of the Deep

So, we have a story involving the return of someone who cheated death by magical means, went on to learn the necromantic arts, and now seeks revenge on those he blames for his current circumstances. Normally, such an individual would be the villain, but the character who meets that description in this adventure is actually the hero on the optimum path.
Moral: Sometimes a conflict is more complicated than just 'goodies' versus 'baddies'.

Sword of the Samurai

It's easy to mock the Kappa. The Shogun's champion loiters beside their river, making a nuisance of himself, and eventually they just give him their greatest treasure. But if you switch the TV on and start channel-hopping, it won't take you long to come across some minor celebrity who got where they are by hanging around in the right place and being annoying until someone started paying them for it. At least the Kappa managed to get rid of the irritating Samurai by paying him off, whereas media culture actually encourages the pests to continue with their tiresome behaviour. Now who's looking stupid, eh?
Moral: Fame can owe as much to persistence as to talent. FF

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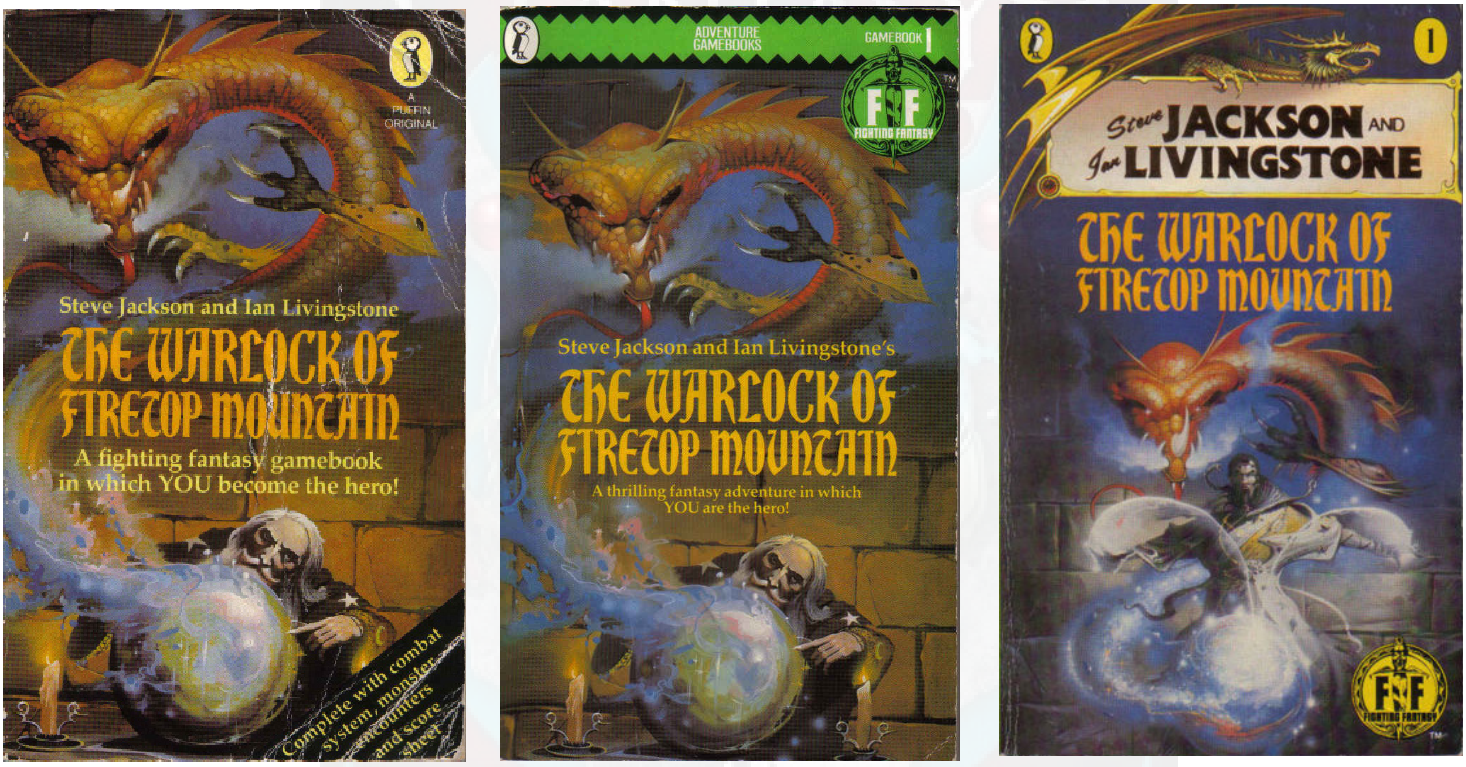
STEVE JACKSON'S
APPOINTMENT WITH F.E.A.R.

www.fightingfantasycollector.co.uk

Collector **Jamie Fry** takes his first deeper look into the world of collecting *Fighting Fantasy* items, picking as the best place to start the very beginnings of the range itself. How many different copies of the now classic *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* do YOU own?

I hope this article finds you fellow *Fighting Fantasy* readers in good spirits after the festive break. For our first proper column on collecting, let's start at the beginning in 1982 with the first book, *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*. It is the best selling (how many millions I forget) and the most well known book of the whole series. According to my collection I have over a dozen different versions. I will explain how I reached that number in a moment after I give you an insight into the writing of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*. The following is a quote I found and kept from the *Kai Wisdom and Fighting Fantasy Mailing List* (posted in 2000) and it was posted by Steve Jackson in response to a question on how both he and Ian Livingstone wrote the book together and who wrote that: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THE WARLOCK OF FIRETOP MOUNTAIN
A thrilling fantasy adventure in which YOU are the hero!
1
Steve JACKSON AND Ian LIVINGSTONE
THE WARLOCK OF FIRETOP MOUNTAIN
FIGHTING FANTASY

From left to right a selection of some of the covers for *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*: the original 1982 edit- the 2002 Wizard Books "Series 1" Special Limited Edition and the 2009 Wizard Books "Series 2" edition. In

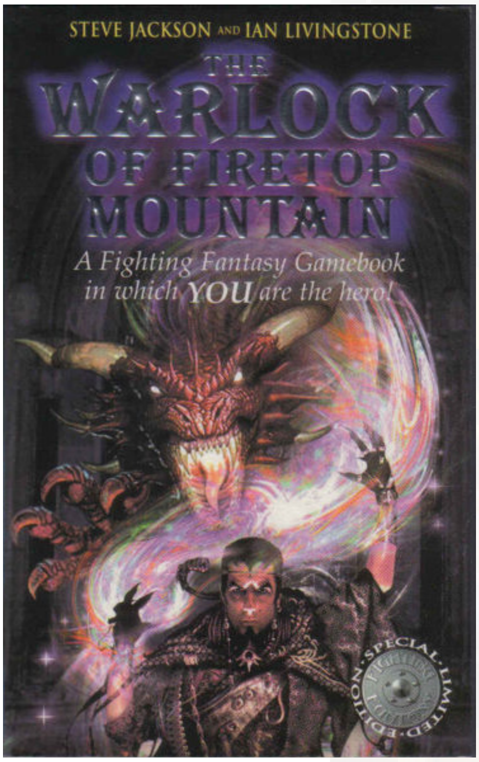
Funny you should mention the river. The river was originally used as the 'halfway point'. Ian wrote from the entrance to the river. I wrote the river onwards (+ rules + keys). The book nearly got rejected by Penguin when we handed the two manuscripts in because there was an obvious difference in styles. In the end I drew the short straw and had to go over Ian's sections re-writing them in 'Jackson style'. That's why WoFTM was the one and only book we wrote together. It made more sense to write books individually.
– Steve Jackson

From the original Penguin series I have seven different cover versions for under the ISBN 0-14-031538-1. The very first being the one with a full wraparound cover, further distinguished by a black triangle in the bottom right-hand corner (1982). This was followed by the version without the wraparound cover and a star on the bottom left-hand side with the number one in the middle (1983). Then the infamous green spine was introduced (1984) with the number on the spine and the zigzag header with "Adventure Gamebooks" written across the centre. This also introduced the unforgettable Puffin *Fighting Fantasy* logo for the first time. It is interesting to learn that a lot of fans dislike the green spines, but I think they are for me what makes them unique and stand out, especially useful when hunting them down in charity shops and car boot sales!

The next four cover versions experienced a change of cover again, with what I call the "Dragon header" instead of the zigzag. Noteworthy at this point is the change in artwork to the cover as well, still by Peter Andrew Jones but with the Warlock receiving a makeover. The first has bronze foil writing in the Dragon header with the number printed on both the spine and front (1987). Again with the bronze foil Dragon header but this time no number on the spine or front (1989). This didn't go down well with the collector's of the day that liked to see the sequential numbers all lined on the bookshelf. This didn't last long and the book was re-printed again (1989) but only with the number on the spine (this edition is also notable as from this point on the word "presents" is included on the cover). Lastly, it was printed again with the number on the spine only (1993) but this time, to keep costs down I presume, the bronze foil of the "Dragon header" was dropped in favour of plain black print.

I am going to disappoint some in terms of valuing this book in all versions thus far, mainly because so many copies and versions were printed. You might think the very first one would command good money, but in all cases they are not worth more than a pound or two in good condition, maybe a bit more if signed. Having met Steve Jackson at Gamesfest 4 in October 2009 he shared with me that he owned a mint copy of the very first edition. If you owned this, signed and with the provenance of it having been Steve's own copy then I would be inclined to put a higher price tag on it, one that us collectors would metaphorically duel to the death for and may the wealthiest win. I did ask and he wouldn't part with it.

Then Wizard Books (Icon) re-released the books setting off a revival, known as "Series 1". A new cover design by Martin Mckenna is introduced, giving the Warlock another new look. The first cover (ISBN 1840463-87-2) entails an embossed silver print book title with the words "Special Limited Edition" around the new logo on the front and across the top to the rear (2002). A non-Special Edition was issued the same year (2002) with the embossing, silver print and reference to special edition removed. I also possess an edition of the same design but with the words "Promotional Edition" under the price tag and it has a different ISBN of 1840465-21-2. Any intelligence on the difference will be of great interest as I am yet to work out what the difference is apart from the ISBN. I suspect they were promotional copies given out to those in the book-selling industry.


STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
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A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
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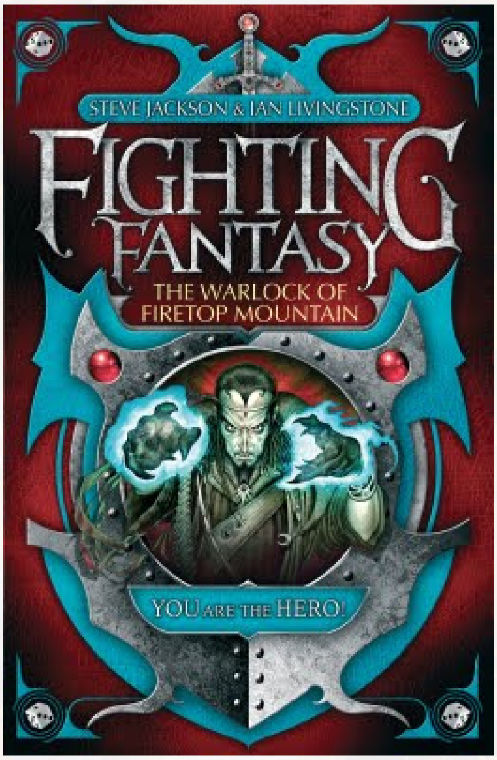
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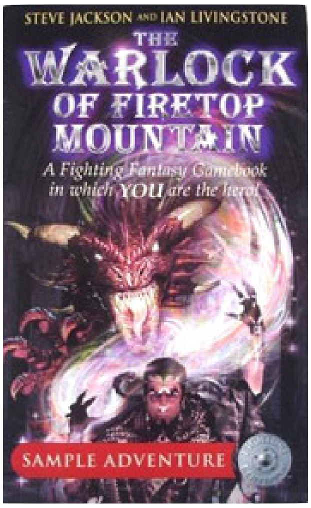
THE WARLOCK OF FIRETOP MOUNTAIN
YOU ARE THE HERO!

ion, the 1984 Adventure Gamebooks edition, the 1987 "Dragon" edition, the top right corner the "Sample Adventure" edition of 2002.

Then follows the delightful sample adventure edition that came with issue 68 (17th December 2003) of the *Cartoon Network Comic.* It contains references up to 165 out of the normal 400 and the different wording of paragraph 165 encourages you to buy the full version where you can continue your quest and start again at paragraph 218. I have the comic with the book and free gift (small plastic skittle set!) still in its original unopened packaging. As these books are still for sale, the full retail price applies in the respective countries, however second-hand they barely command a few pounds as before. The sample edition might be the exception here and change hands for up to £5 if you are a serious collector beyond the standard books.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A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SAMPLE ADVENTURE

A hardback 25th Anniversary Edition was released by Wizard in 2007 (ISBN 978-1840468-37-3). Its cover depicts the artwork from the 1982 original. It comes complete with interviews, the 'one true way' solution, additional Fighting Fantasy facts and miscellaneous information, (an incomplete) books and collectables inventory and a foldout map. I am led to believe and well informed by Steve Jackson that only 5000 of these were ever printed, however I am yet to confirm this elsewhere (as far as I am aware it was also only available on-line, however you might get lucky in second-hand bookstore). If this was the case it could be that this will be a rare collectable to own and be worth far more than the original £8.99 price tag. My copy is also signed by both authors so is even more desirable.

2009 has seen yet another surprise revival of the books with *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (ISBN 978-184310-75-9) being re-published in a "Series 2". The books are published in the larger B-format, embossed cover with shield design sparking some controversy among some fans. It also has a very distinctive spine with artwork. The books can now be played with pre-rolled characters. Another new version of the Warlock is introduced on the cover by Martin Mckenna. As this is so new the retail price still applies unless you can pick it up cheaper on Ebay or Amazon.

Lastly, I must mention the US version (ISBN 0-44-099381-4) published by Dell in 1983. I do have a few foreign versions of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* as well but haven't yet attempted to source all the versions printed in twenty-five odd other countries.

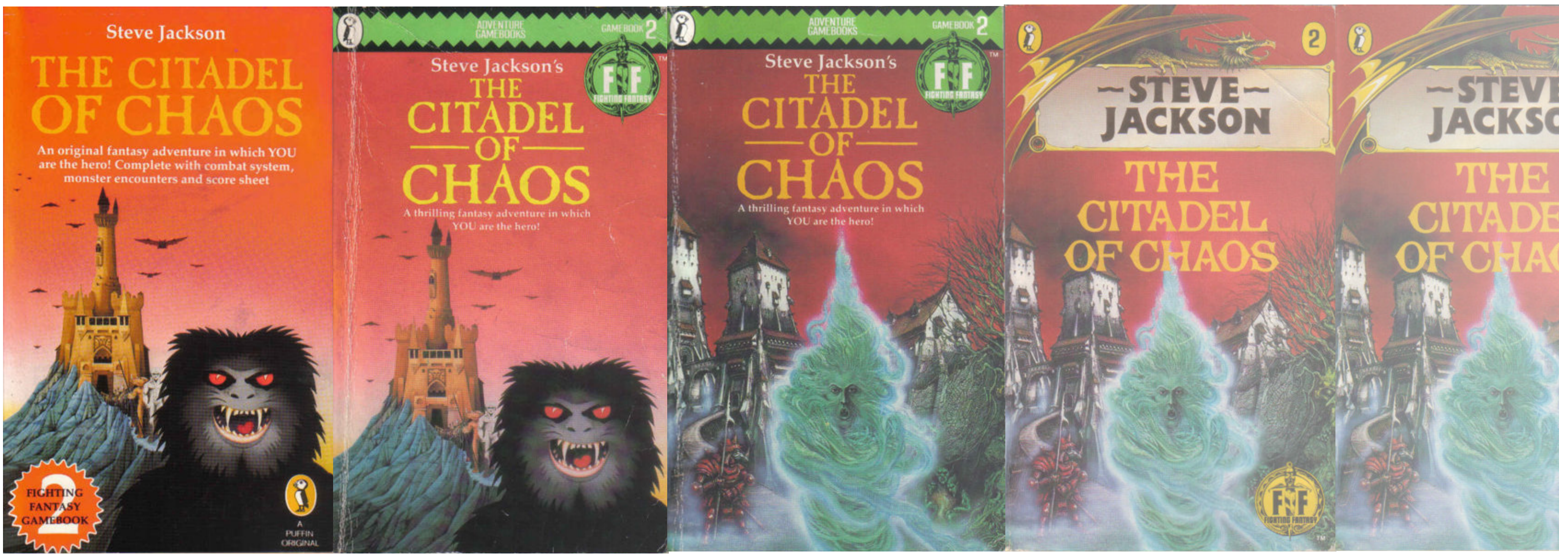
Happy New Year. **FF**

FIGHTING DANTASY

Dan revisits the Fighting Fantasy series, one gamebook at a time...

Remember reading your first *Fighting Fantasy* adventure? The desperate search for the items you need to win, the frantic dice rolls as you fight to stay in one piece mere paragraphs from your goal? **Dan Satherley** has decided to recreate those tense moments from our childhoods by working his way through the series book by book and recording his efforts as he goes.

The Citadel of Chaos has a very similar premise to *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, in that you must venture into a place with loads of monsters, traps and groups of doors from which you can only choose one (it seems never in *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks do you peek through a slightly open door – it's all or nothing, every time), ultimately facing off against an evil magician. There's no treasure at the end of *Citadel* though, at least as far as I know, 'cause I didn't complete it. Nope. Didn't even get as far as the villain, Balthus Dire, which is a pity as apparently Steve Jackson put many hours of planning into how the final battle would work.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2
STEVE JACKSON
THE CITADEL OF CHAOS
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I didn't start so well, rolling a SKILL level of 7, STAMINA 20 and LUCK 8. In this gamebook, you get a bunch of spells, of which the dice were kind and gave me 14. With such low SKILL, I chose several *Creature Copy* spells, which create a clone of your opponent to fight on your side. What I needed in the end were levitation spells, but I'll get there in time.

So at the entrance to the, er, citadel, were an ape with a dog face, and a dog with the face of... yep, an ape. Interesting. So far, so it seemed Steve Jackson had run out of ideas after only one book. I told them I was there to stay the night, and walked right in, which apparently is what you do when confronted by a pair of Wuzzles.

The first person I came across once inside was a dying man, whom I ignored. He wanted my STAMINA spell, and with such a low SKILL level, I decided I was going to need it more than him. Besides, if I gave it to him, it'll encourage panhandling, and there are enough beggars in the *Fighting Fantasy* world already! I came across some later on, who weren't happy till I'd given them every gold piece I had.

Anyway. Something you don't do in *Citadel* it turns out is hang around places for too long. Much like the crypt in *Warlock*, hanging around almost anywhere on this adventure results in flaming shit being thrown at you – or your arrest. Even in the library, too much loitering can get you locked up in a cell guarded by a two-headed bipedal snake. Not that it happened to me, not at all. (At least not before learning the three-digit combination to Balthus Dire's room, which you have to admit is laughably short, even in a world where most doors can be broken down with a decent shoulder barge, but suspiciously convenient for a 400-section book.)

Another place I hung around in too long, inadvisably, was the wine cellar. In *Warlock*, drinking rum gives you STAMINA. In *Citadel*, drinking wine gives you hallucinations, and makes you tell people things you should keep secret. Whomever said *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks weren't realistic?

So after some rose wine, I told the winemaker I was not a travelling herb salesman, as had been my cover story thus far. No, I was actually on my way to kill his master, Balthus Dire. D'oh. A fight inevitably ensued, something I would've expected after rum, but not a couple of glasses of red. Ah well.

Perhaps I should've taken some with me further on the adventure, as I soon ran into a crazy biatch in bed who wanted presents. I offered her a silver mirror, which she didn't care for – considering she was attempting to shoot me with beams of fire from her eyes, perhaps I shouldn't have bothered! The book asked if perhaps I wanted to offer her a spider-man in a jar... WTF? I love some of the items you get asked if you have. The ones you never do always sound way more interesting. Like the cheese, from *Warlock*. The closest I came to cheese this time around were some berries, but berries you can put in a pouch or something. Cheese you need to wrap, and the book didn't say anything about having a roll of clingfilm in my rucksack.

So how did it all end? I encountered the Ganjees, who were basically like disembodied Banshees, flying around screaming and whatnot. I ran towards the door on the other side of the room, not realising it was a door OUT of the citadel. D'oh. I'd used my only *Levitation* spell earlier, when a staircase became a 'super fun happy slide' (heh, you can get *The Simpsons* references out of anything). My 'broken body' landed in a 'crumpled heap'. Ouch.

So, all in all, I'm guessing *The Citadel of Chaos* would be easier to complete than *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, not that I managed either. I say this because I've attempted the latter so many times without ever succeeding, and am pretty sure once I knew what spells to choose at the beginning of the former, it wouldn't be that difficult. None of the monsters I encountered were much of a threat, and it's not like there are keys you need to collect in the right combination in order to succeed.

STEVE JACKSON
THE CITADEL OF CHAOS
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
STEVE JACKSON
FIGHTING FANTASY
THE CITADEL OF CHAOS
YOU ARE THE HERO!
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This book isn't as well known as *Warlock*, which is perhaps to be expected. It's very similar, without being as ground-breaking; and has a pretty lame cover. Having a lame cover though has never been an impediment to a great *Fighting Fantasy* adventure – just look at the atrocity on the cover of *Phantoms of Fear*, compared to the great adventure contained inside (the less said about *Sky Lord* though, the better).

So that was *The Citadel of Chaos*. **FF**

Adapted from Fightingdantasy.blogspot.com

turn to paragraph 1.

COMING IN ISSUE #3
APRIL 2010

THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

Long-standing *Fighting Fantasy* artist **Martin McKenna** is interviewed, looking both back to his start in illustration, as well as the future with more personal material...

prey of the hunter

by **Kieran Coghlan**

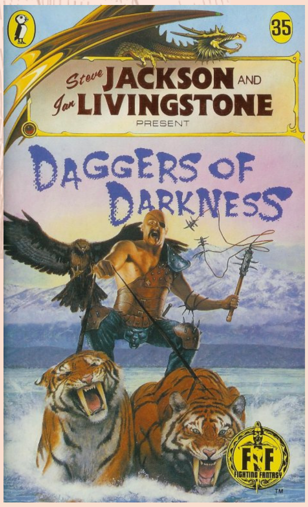
After a mission goes wrong, YOU find yourself stranded on the lawless backwater planet of Karthran-6, forced to play the twisted game of a sadistic alien. You must use any means necessary to get off planet, for if your enemy tracks you down before you do, you're as good as dead...

Everything I Really Need to Know I Learnt from Reading *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*

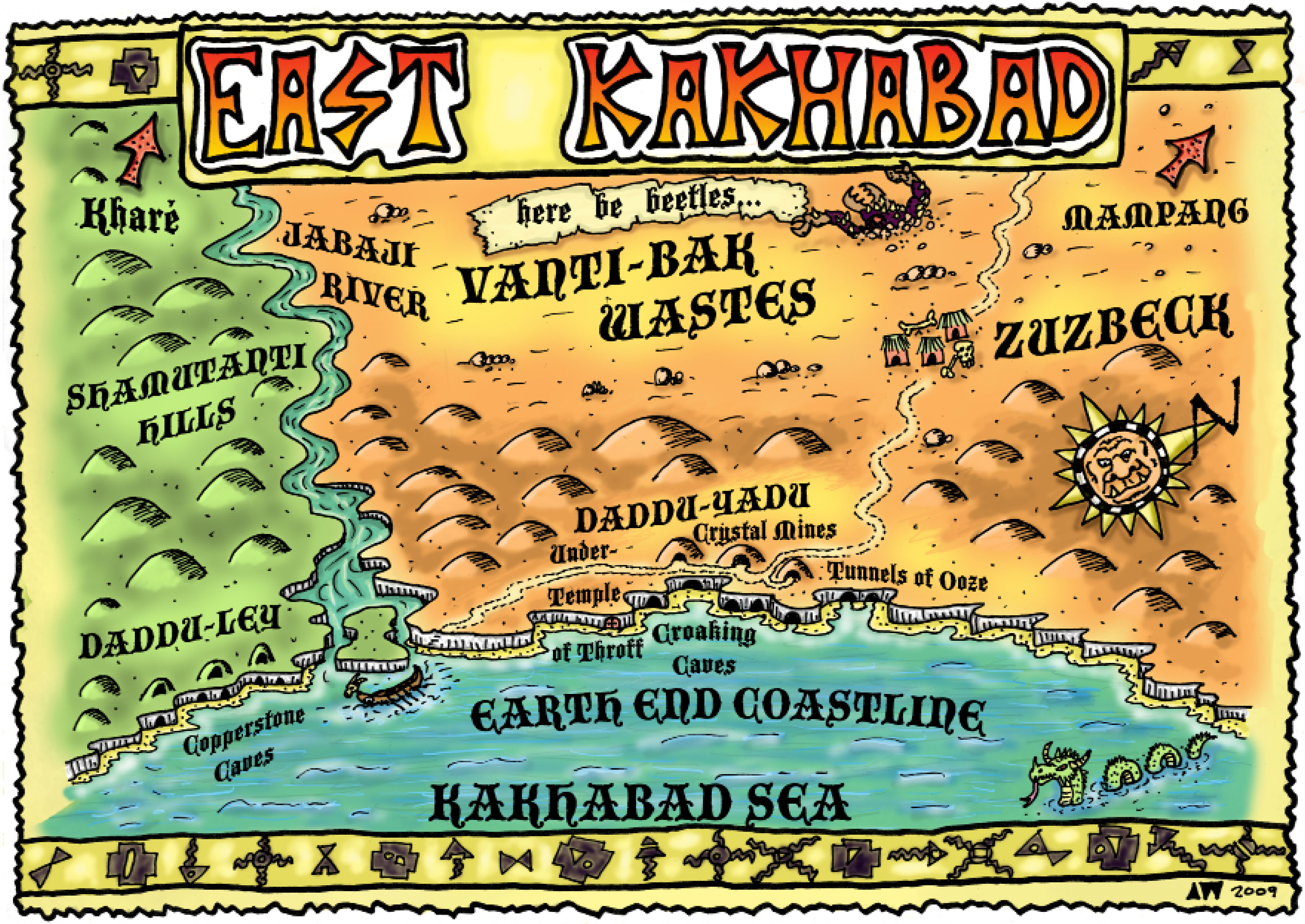
Part Three of **Ed Jolley**'s series of articles of tongue-in-cheek ruminations on the books, poking fun at some of their absurdities and drawing tenuously-related "life lessons" from them.

the fact of fiction: DAGGERS OF DARKNESS

The dynamic duo of **Warren McGuire** and **Andrew Wright** go tag team on **Luke Sharp's** third gamebook in order to force it to reveal the secrets of text and image.



and much more!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